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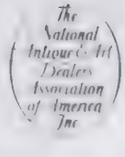

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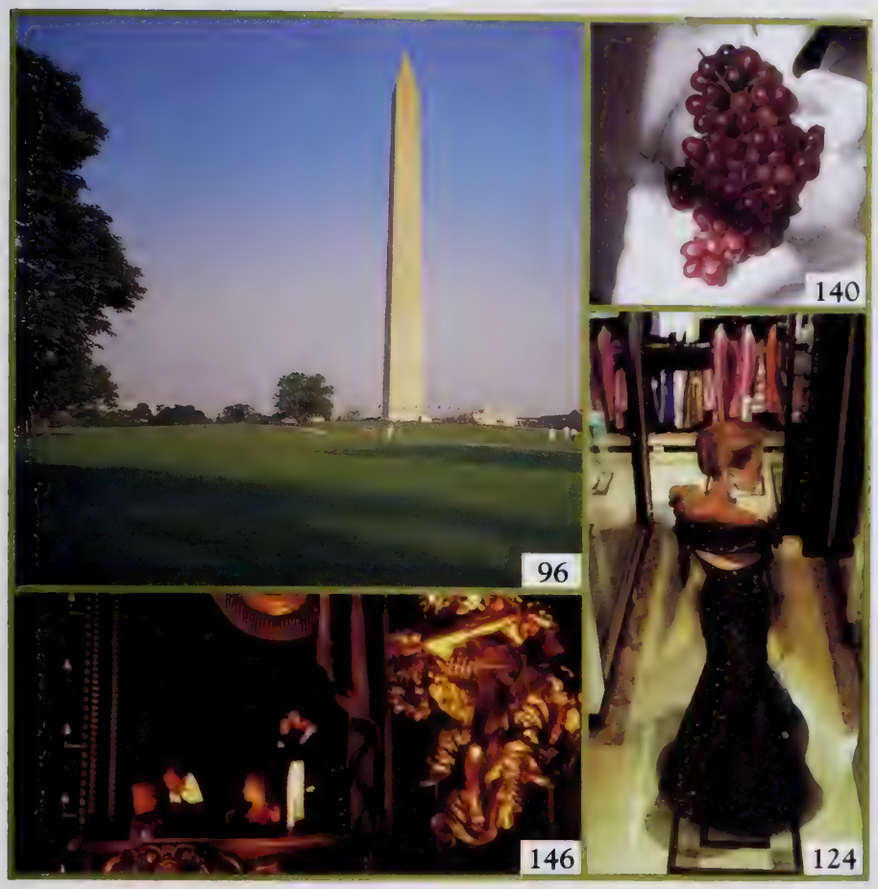

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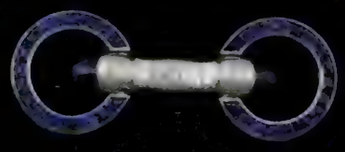

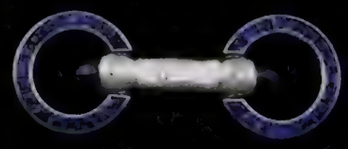

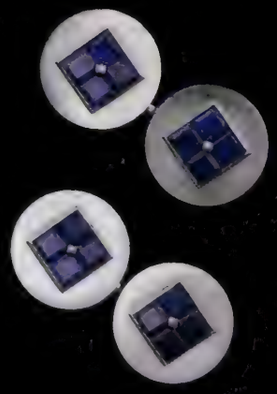

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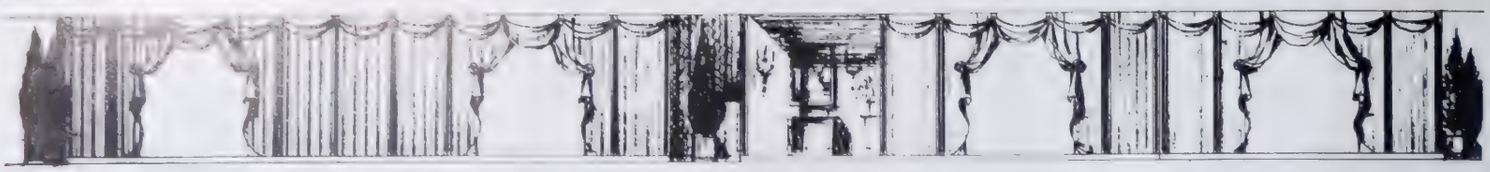

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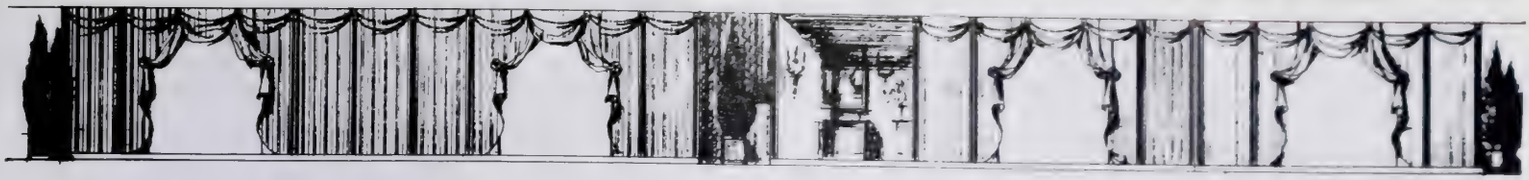
Stamped Lucas. [illegible]. Height 85 cms, width 64 cms, depth 41 cms.



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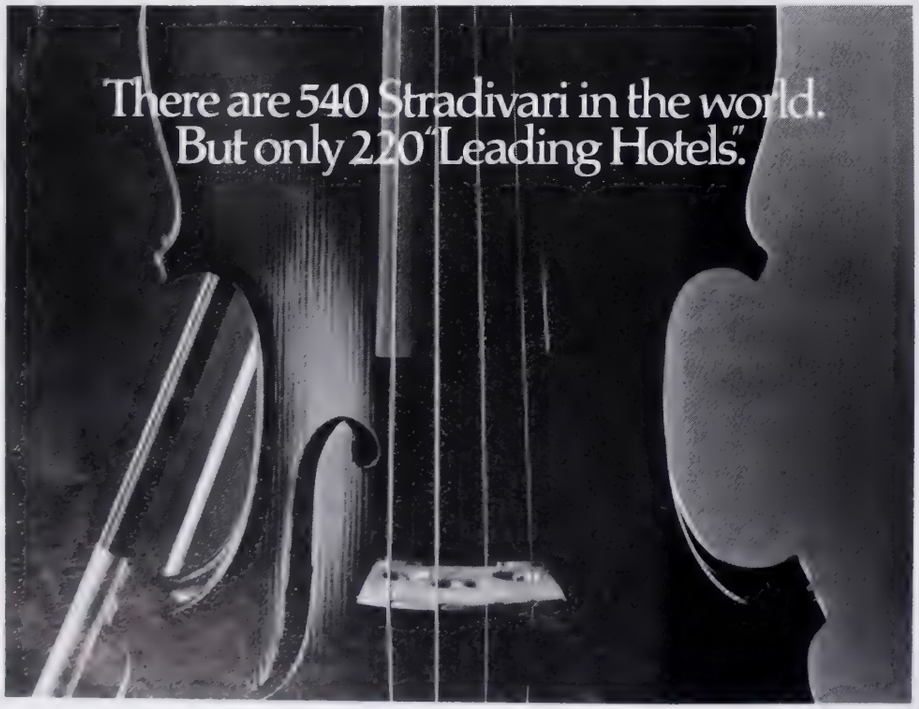

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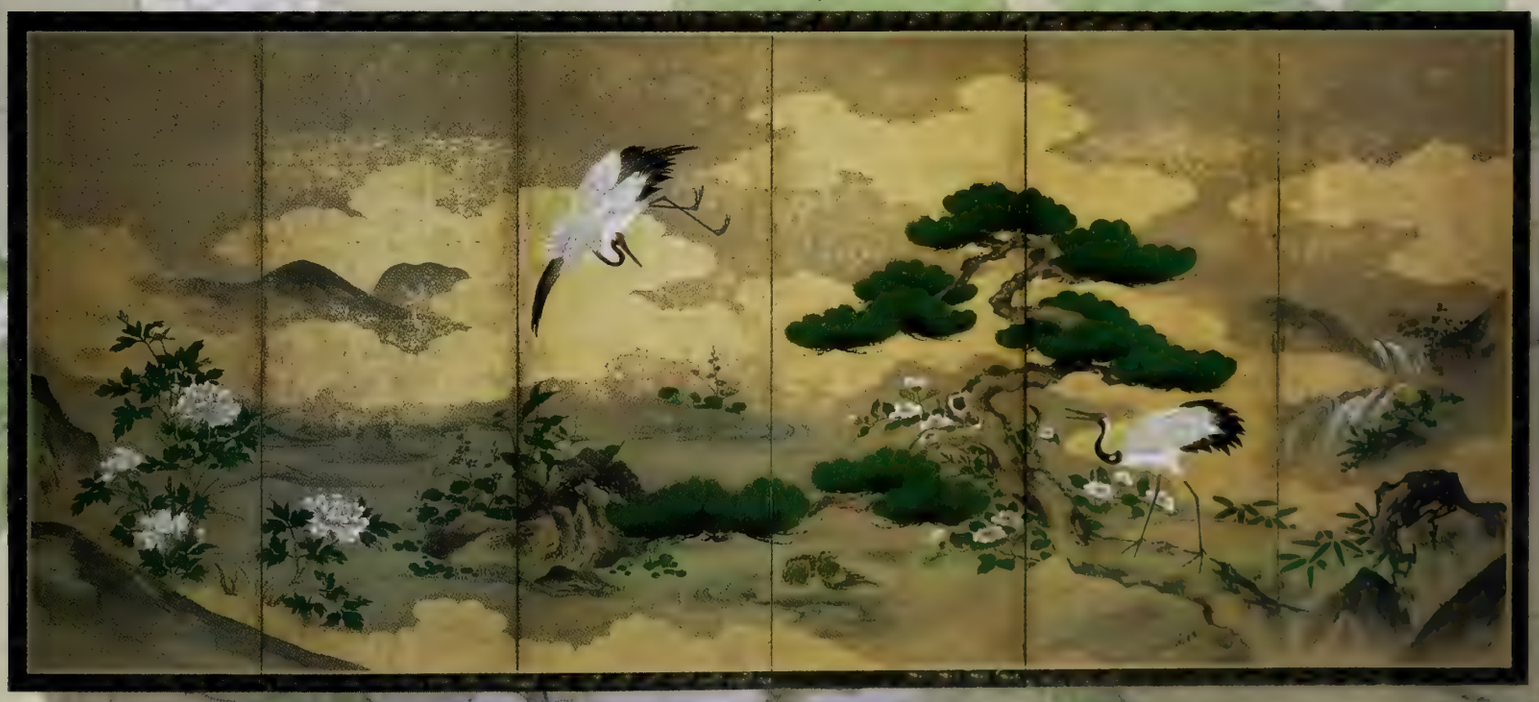

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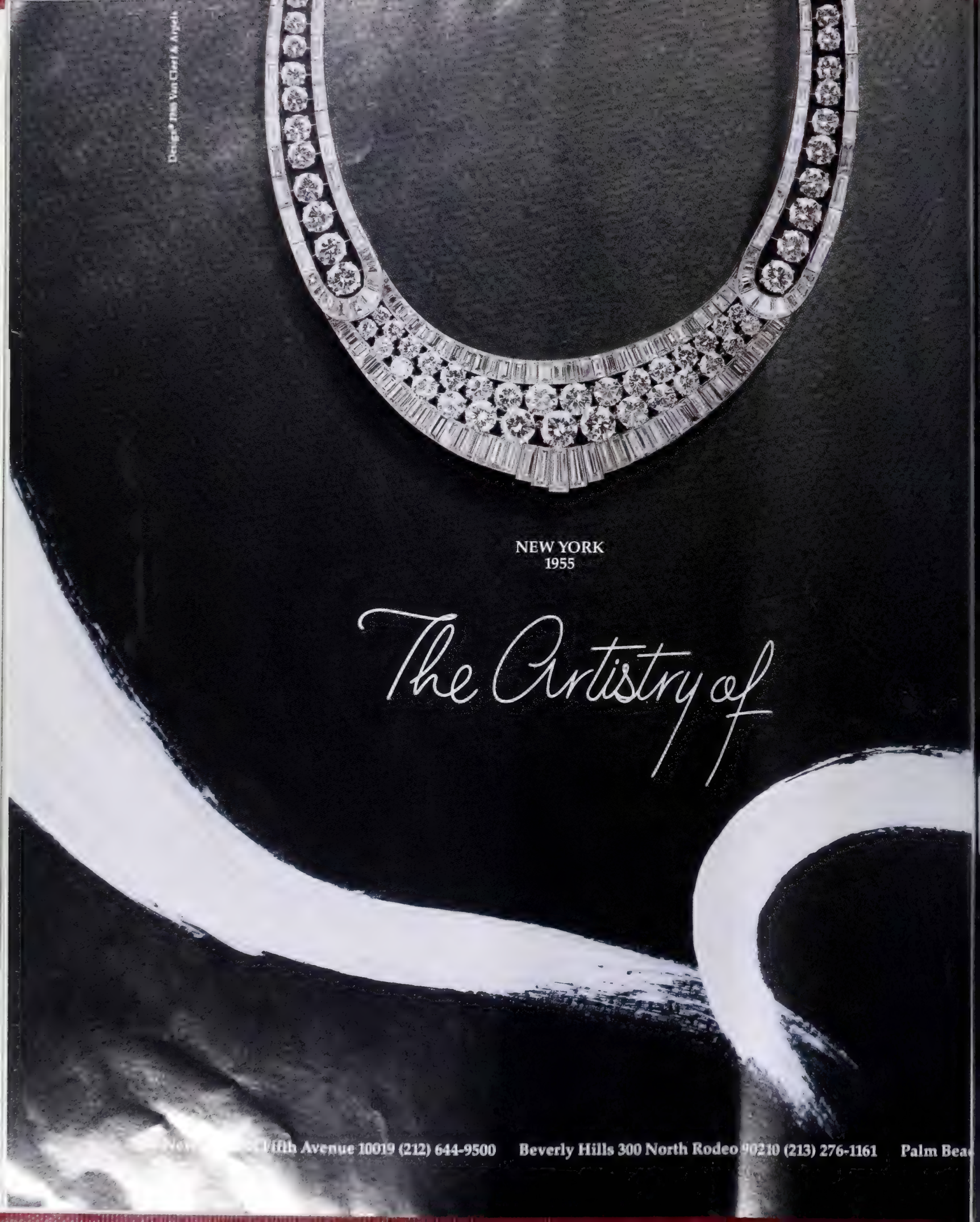
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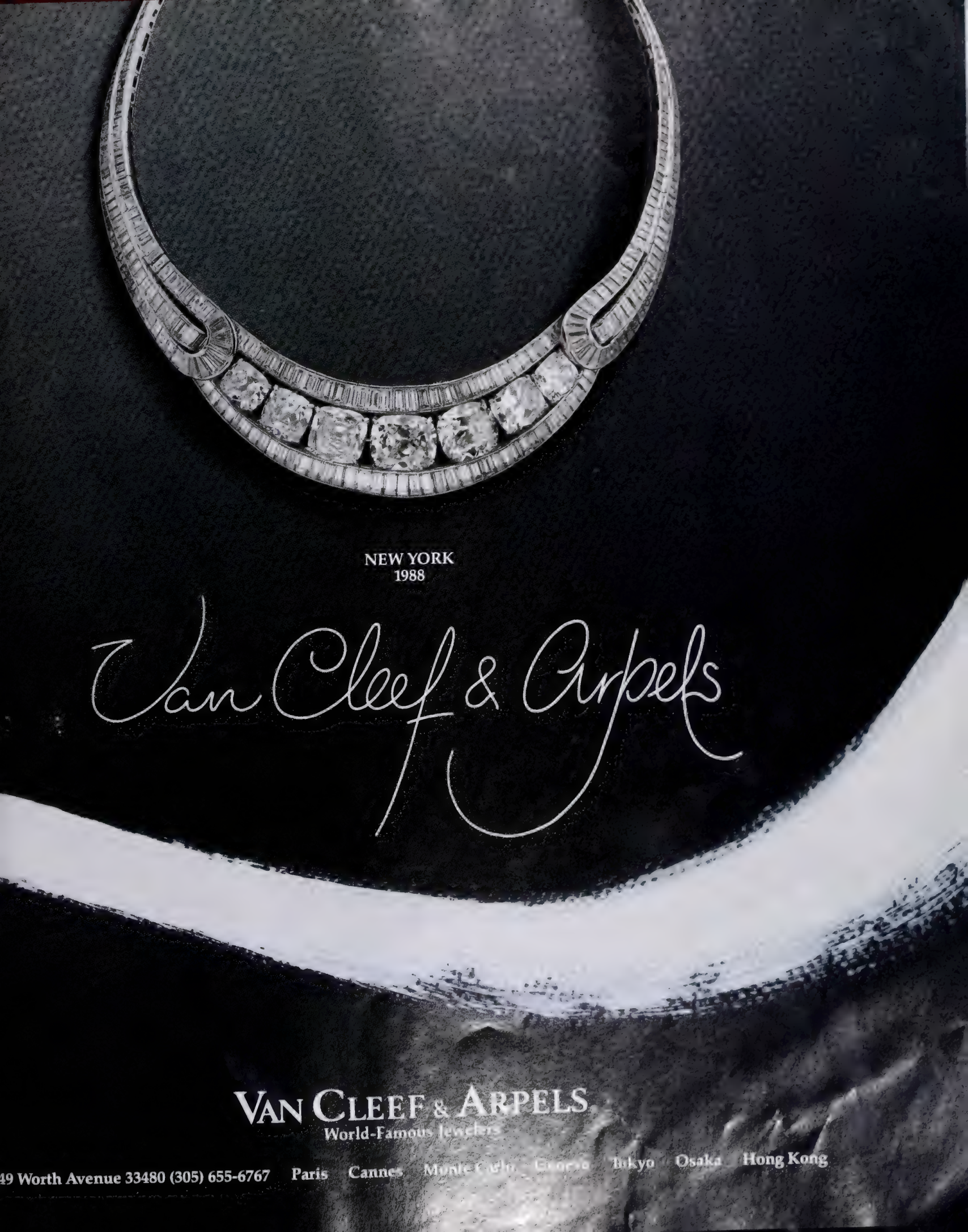
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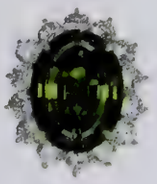

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COPPOLA RIDES A TUCKER

Francis Ford Coppola has wanted to make a movie about the visionary automobile designer Preston Tucker for at least a dozen years. Now that the film has been made, you can see why. Although it is not a work of comparable depth, *Tucker*, starring Jeff Bridges, is Coppola's most successful film since the *Godfather* movies. His excitement over his subject has reinvigorated his art.

COURTESY LUCASFILM LTD. (2)

Premature exultation: Joan Allen and Jeff Bridges in *Tucker*.

Tucker, who made a name for himself during World War II designing a turret for combat aircraft, was beaten down by the Big Three automobile manufacturers in the late 1940s when he attempted to mass-produce a car that was radically ahead of its time. Not only was the Tucker equipped with fuel injection, seat belts, a rear engine, and pop-out windshields, but it also sold for a mere half the price of its Detroit counterparts.

Coppola connects with Tucker's downfall. Ever since *Apocalypse Now* and *One from the Heart*, he has cast himself as the cinema's ranking martyr-genius. The surprise of *Tucker* is that Coppola has not shaped the film as a self-referential tragedy. Tucker's downfall—which is a given from the first frame—is dramatized, instead, as a high-flying ode to American entrepreneurship. Even though Tucker was forced out of the auto business after producing only fifty-one of his cars (forty-seven still survive in running condition), the film celebrates his moment of glory. In Coppola's film, visionaries live in a world where they flourish in their time for only an instant.

STAR CAR

Preston Tucker produced a great American automotive legend as well as a great American car. The Tucker, designed and made after World War II, is by many expert accounts a remarkably well constructed, safe, speedy (sixty mph in sixteen seconds), aerodynamic automobile, with a rear-mounted engine that gave it the best power-to-weight ratio of any contemporary cars (most of which hadn't been substantially redesigned since before the war). Still, its quality only begins to explain the devotion it inspires from its owners and fans. Each remaining Tucker is a symbol of a great, if pyrrhic, act of American ingenuity, design, and entrepreneurialism. The director Francis Ford Coppola owns two, as does the producer George Lucas. The Tucker is also exceedingly rare (forty-seven of the fifty-one made are still around, but eight of them are already in museum collections). According to Lisa Cowan, editor of the *Tucker Automobile Club of America Newsletter*, about one or two are on the market at any one time. The price of a Tucker has reached approximately $100,000 this year for a fully restored model. If you do get tempted to enter the world of Tucker enthusiasts, the best road is the Tucker Automobile Club of America (Helen Soeder-Riemer, Secretary, 4411 Oak Park Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44109).

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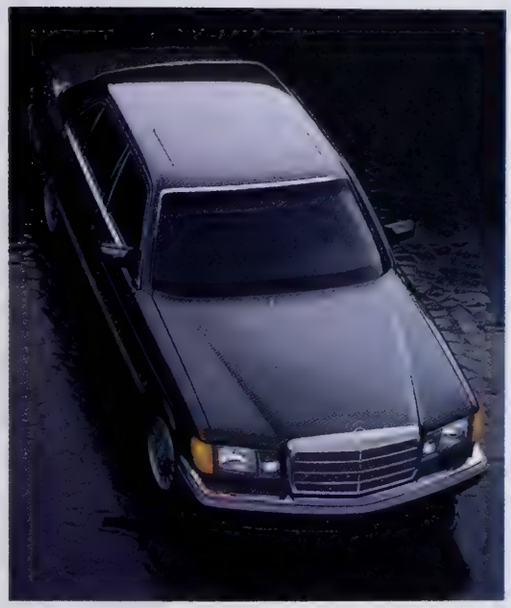

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Coppola's worldview here is obviously selective (a successful American genius like Thomas Edison, for instance, does not fit into it), but his approach is also surprisingly tough-minded. The movie may have a breezy, almost vaudevillian spirit and a forties look that is like *Life* magazine's at its highest gloss, but it is as much about now as about then. When Tucker rails against the Big Three, saying, "They don't give a damn about people; all they care about is profits," Coppola and his scriptwriters, Arnold Schulman and David Seidler, are really speaking to the decline in the American frontier spirit and the triumph of the bottom line. The Tucker motto—"Don't let the future pass you by"—could stand as the film's, as well.

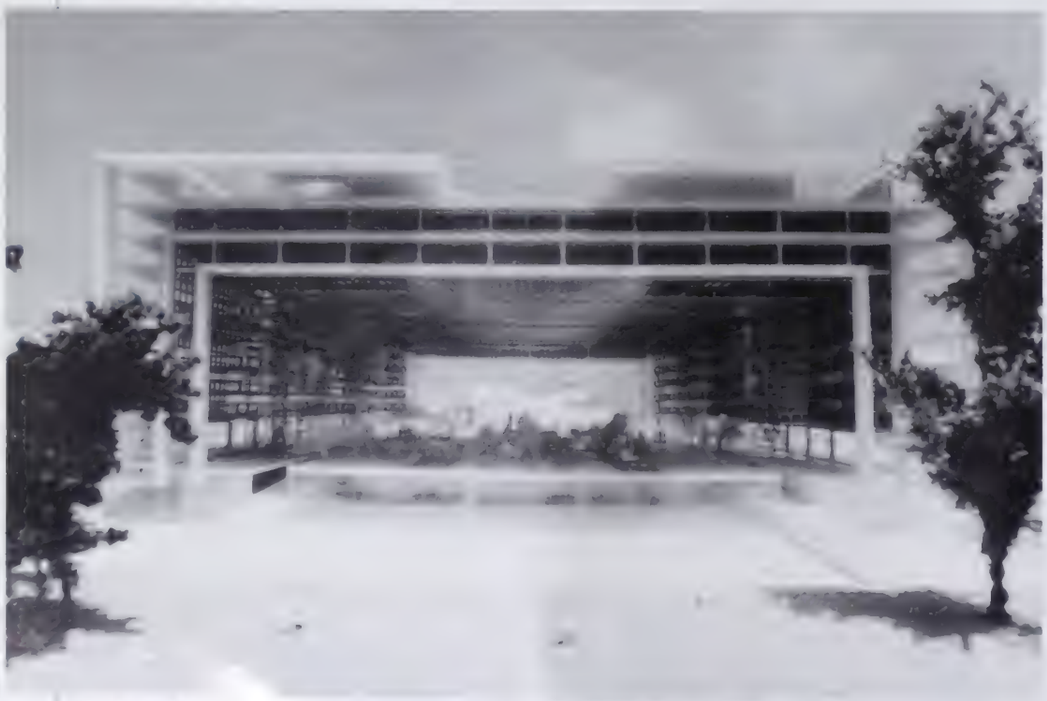
Tucker does not have the *Godfather* movies' rich, novelistic textures. It also does not attempt a psychological portrait of a visionary or suggest the self-defeatist streak that is often part of a martyr's makeup. Bridges, along with Joan Allen as Vera Tucker and Martin Landau as the Tuckers' beleaguered friend and business agent, are surpassingly good, even if they are locked into a two-dimensional plane. Still, Coppola seems most comfortable with two dimensions now. *Tucker* may be shallow, but it is fervently shallow. By the end, its bright, pop charms, its sloganeering, and its "Don't think twice about it" come to seem quintessentially American. It is an upbeat elegy. —*Peter Rainer*

COURTESY THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION WASHINGTON, D.C.

Warren Gamaliel Harding, nicely portrayed for a change, by Margaret Lindsay Williams (ca. 1923).

PREZ PIX

One of the great accomplishments—and delights—of our nation's capital is an institution that, we suspect, most sophisticated art lovers (especially those from provincial New York) assiduously ignore: we are talking about the National Portrait Gallery and its "partner," the National Museum of American Art. They are discreet, beautifully and intelligently laid out exhibition spaces, where one can flee from the armies of visitors at the more fashionable art palaces and lose oneself in undisturbed contemplation. All this may sound soporific, but the collection of presidential portraits at the gallery happens to be one of the liveliest installations in America, full of gorgeous pictures and a few surprises. Among the latter is the notorious portrait of LBJ by Peter Hurd—the one Johnson detested. He was right: this is a stiff, pompous horror of an icon, a thoroughly failed painting. For worse, go see what they did to Jack Kennedy. The rest of the pictures are for the most part excellent. President Warren G. Harding, for example, has never looked better. —*T.H.*



[illegible] the French architecture scene, is putting up Vichy's new landmark, a spa—[illegible]te to water—rendered by various ingenious uses of glass.

NOUVEL TAKES THE WATERS

He may be France's most sought-after architect, but do not expect Jean Nouvel to move into one of his own creations. The designer of the acclaimed Institut du Monde Arabe, in Paris, says he would probably just second-guess himself to death.

The Perrier people, however, don't seem to have any such reservations about Nouvel's work. The sparkling-water company recently hired the fifty-two-year-old designer to build them a Fr 240 million hotel and hydrotherapy center in Vichy, which they are hoping will make "taking the waters" in that central French city fashionable once again. Where his architect rival the postmodernist Ricardo Bofill proposed an Acropolis-like structure, Nouvel submitted a design that focused on utility, the surrounding environment, and the theme of expensive pleasure. And as

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he has done with all his buildings, Nouvel has aimed to put light and space to their fullest use.

His eight-story structure will be shaped like an elongated glass cube, hollowed out in the middle to form a huge, open-ended hallway. The exterior will be constructed entirely from glass, and the interior walls, like the floors, will be curved and covered with glass paving to give a sense of depth and transparency. Each of the luxury hotel's 200 rooms, which Nouvel designed with Philippe Starck, will face south, and the large central vault over the hall will be decorated with gold leaf (actually copper, for economy's sake). Also, the generous use of more than twenty types of glass should contribute to the feel of luxuriousness, spaciousness, and light.

When it is completed, in 1991, the Vichy spa complex will include swimming pools, medical facilities, baths, massage parlors, and conference rooms. "It's an architecture of visual pleasure and luxury," says Nouvel of his latest addition to the Vichy cityscape. "People used to cut themselves off from the world there, with their mistresses more often than with their wives. I've tried to evoke this sense of physical pleasure." —*Nicholas Powell*

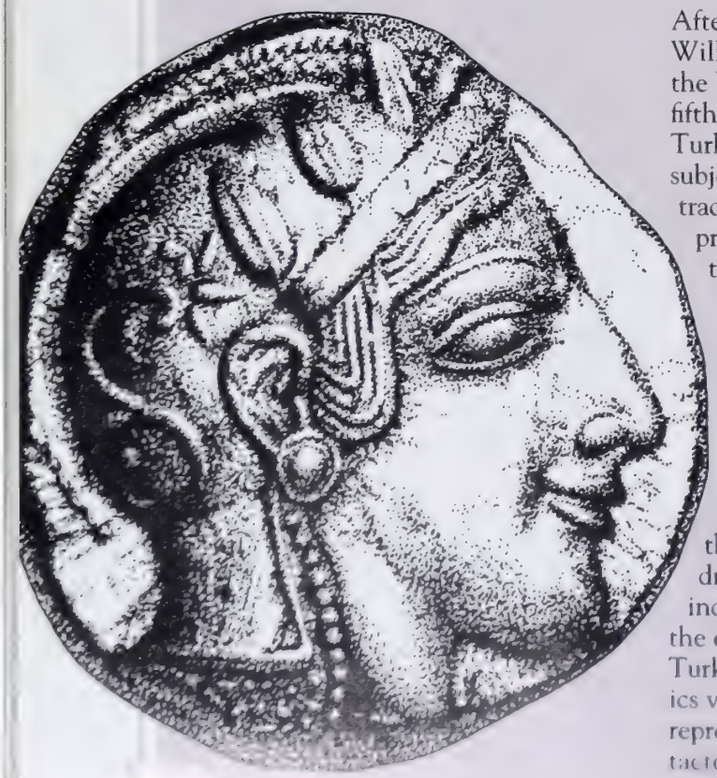
HOWARD ASSOCIATES, 1988

Great architecture? Skidmore Owings & Merrill's attempt at a new set of buildings for Columbus Circle.

THE CRITIC SMILES

The architecture critic Paul Goldberger, of the *New York Times,* seems to pull punches on some subjects, as if there were some friends in the architectural brotherhood he could not bear to bruise. How else to explain Goldberger's stance on the horrendous addition number 1 to the Whitney Museum, by the chic Michael Graves? He seemed to love it at first but then had qualms when surrounded by dissenting,

THE HOARD OF THE CENTURY: UPDATE



After maintaining a staunch silence, William Koch, the prime investor in the hoard of nearly 2,000 matchless fifth-century B.C. coins smuggled from Turkey, responded to our article on the subject by giving an interview to the trade weekly *Coin World.* Koch expressed amazement at "how byzantine" the matter had become and defended at length the propriety of his purchase. He also criticized the article in the July *Connoisseur* for advancing "speculations" that he characterized as "inaccurate." Koch went on to assert that he had bought from "bona fide dealers," noting that they had a shop. He did not address the fact that the Munich-based individuals from whom he bought the coins had been convicted in a Turkish court for antiquities and narcotics violations. Koch insisted that no representative of Turkey had ever contacted him about any claims on the coins, and expressed the opinion that this "calls into question the credibility of the [*Connoisseur*] article and the agenda of the authors." Turkey made the following statement through one of its American lawyers: "The government is aware of the article and is taking appropriate steps."

In the same *Coin World* article, Bruce McNall, chairman of Numismatic Fine Arts and comanager of the Athena Fund, strongly criticized *Connoisseur* for misreporting the facts of the case. He denied a suggestion in our article that he may have sold a decadrachm from the hoard to the Athena Fund at a profit, in apparent violation of the Athena Fund charter, by discussing another (irrelevant) coin. McNall alleged that he offered to make available to the authors records of his firm and other documents. The authors maintain that such documents were promised but never delivered. McNall further stated that he was demanding a retraction from *Connoisseur;* at press time, no such request had been received. —*R.K.*

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not to say outraged, voices. More recently, Goldberger seems to have fallen into more-abject genuflection before scheme number 2 of the Columbus Circle reconstruction plan. He plumps hard for an ungainly welter of structures designed by David Childs, of Skidmore Owings & Merrill. With this on his record, Goldberger has sunk to a new nadir of critical responsibility. Childs's huge and unintentional parody of Manhattan deco is in many ways less acceptable than Moshe Safdie's scheme 1—it is bland to the point of pusillanimity, and, even worse, it is a mediocre rip-off of what was already hackneyed back in the thirties; a pulp edition of Rockefeller Center. —*T.H.*

POUSSIN HATCHING

Renowned today for his spiritually grand, classical canvases, Nicolas Poussin began his career as a suave, school of Fontainebleau mannerist. Just how that transition began—always a bit of a muddle to art historians—is the subject of a rare and controversial retrospective of the French artist at Forth Worth's Kimbell Art Museum.

The show focuses on the 1620s, a period that saw Poussin move from Paris to Rome and begin to absorb the various elements that would eventually lead to the establishment of French classical painting. The first major exhibition of the artist in North America, the show provides a singular opportunity to witness the dazzling yet serious-minded artistry of Poussin's youthful mythological paintings.

After fifteen years of sleuthing, the guest curator Konrad Oberhuber has untangled the different stylistic threads of Poussin's artistic influences. Drawings were summoned as evidence for reattributing paintings long ascribed to other artists. On the basis of this, Oberhuber creates what amounts to a new chronology of Poussin's work and revamps the prevailing perception of his development. Gone is the image of the student methodically and systematically absorbing such things as Domenichino's monumentality and Titian's light. In its place is a picture of a young artist caught up in an exciting process of self-education, integrating the Italian tradition and his French heritage.

The exhibition's thirty-seven paintings, shored up by sixty drawings, monitor Poussin's stylistic heartbeat with the accuracy of an EKG. Those already familiar with the artist's work are sure to be fascinated by the new artistic data, but even the nonspecialist will respond to the wind-blown embrace of landscape that Poussin mastered on his solitary walks before translating clouds and trees into rhapsodic mythological settings for Venus and Adonis, or Diana and Endymion. Seeing this fusion of myth and realistic landscape, one recognizes a pictorial intelligence that brilliantly makes the most of what it knows. The exhibition is on display through November 27. —*Marjorie Welish*

COURTESY KIMBELL ART MUSEUM, FORT WORTH, TEXAS

The early Poussin is rediscovered at the Kimbell: above, *Rinaldo and Armida* (1629).

William
work.

THE ANTIQUE-HOME SPECIALIST

You might say it was a house at a crossroads. Built some two centuries ago, when its East Berlin, Connecticut, environs were a tad more rustic, the magnificent center-chimney colonial now looked out on a busy intersection, in a part of town bustling with light industry and heavy trucks. To make matters more precarious, the state had just announced a road-widening project that would bring an enormous storm drain to within eight feet of its 200-year-old foundation and fragile, wood roof beams. If the two-story house were to be saved, its owners would have to act immediately.

Enter Bill Norton, whose Eighteenth Century Company not only rescues endangered historic homes but restores to them

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their original charm. Norton and his associates dismantled the house floorboard by floorboard, painstakingly numbering and lettering each window sash and piece of paneling before packing everything up for a 200-mile trip to northern Vermont. The grande dame is now resting comfortably with a wonderful view of the Presidential Range, temporarily safe from the ravages of modernity.

The work is time-consuming and exceptionally demanding. Fireboxes (the fireplace's guts, less the chimney), which can weigh up to fifty-five tons, must be lifted whole by giant cranes and hoisted onto tractor-trailers. If a client wants an authentically appointed eighteenth-century house, each of the hundreds of clapboards must be laboriously hand-stripped. And then there is the installation of modern necessities—insulation; state-of-the-art electrical, heating, and cooling systems, for instance—as well as the new kitchens, baths, and laundry rooms that the company will often design and construct to clients' specifications.

The son, grandson, and great-grandson of carpenters, Norton operates from a millwork shop behind his family's resurrected 1710 colonial in Durham, Connecticut. Within a loftlike space filled with heavy-duty joiners, planers, table saws, and the occasional neat pile of sawdust, he and his staff fashion hand-beaded kitchen cabinets that will eventually encase such twentieth-century conveniences as microwave ovens, double-door refrigerators, and dishwashers. Norton's abundantly stocked shop can match doors, windows, dentil molding—in fact, almost anything not found in the original house.

The Eighteenth Century Company also collects and stores bits and pieces from early-American buildings: an assortment of front doors with curved pediments, elaborately carved and reeded fireplace mantels, and entire walls of paneling. At one time, Norton sold these fragments as individual antiques—the Metropolitan Museum's American Wing bought floorboards from him several years back—but these days he prefers to incorporate such artifacts into a meticulously designed room or a house restoration.

If Norton has learned anything in the two decades since he took up this line of work, it is that there is a limit to his restorative powers. "You can't take on the world," he sighs. "Even if you run like a [illegible] blast, pulling up every house in [illegible] you [illegible] they are still [illegible]." —*Joan Bidman*

JULIO DONOSO/SYGMA

These people dance up a storm: the Georgian State Dance Company with its doyenne, Nina Ramishvili.

STEELY DANCE

More than 2,000 years ago, warriors from what is now the Soviet republic of Georgia danced with the severed heads of their vanquished foes. Decapitation may have since gone out of vogue, but as far as the Georgian State Dance Company is concerned, the fervor behind it has not. Outfitted with sabers, daggers, and shields, the troupe's dancers leap and shadowbox in terrifying mock combat—the choreographic legacy of Georgia's unending battles with invading Romans, Arabs, Mongols, Persians, Turks, and Russians. Their blades are keen enough to slice the stage floor, and as steel strikes steel, sparks fly. Of the male dancers in the company (they outnumber the women three to one), hardly one is unscarred.

In the famous *Tseruli*, a mountain dance named after the Georgian word for big toe, macho virtuosity takes a different form. The dance number, which demands both nerves and arches of steel, re-creates a furious competition among the men, who taunt one another with reckless displays of toe dancing wearing only soft, unconstructed leather boots.

The seventy-five-member troupe was founded in the early 1940s by Nina Ramishvili and her husband, Iliko Sukhishvili. When he died, three years ago, Nina stayed on as founding director and choreographer, while the mantle of artistic director fell to their son, Tengiz. Her grandson, the sixteen-year-old Iliko Sukhishvili, recently donned the troupe's traditional black leggings and embroidered jacket and is already recognized as the heir apparent. "If Iliko were alive today, he'd be doing the same thing we are—attempting to preserve the old traditions but also searching for something new," says Nina. "We try to follow his path. But we must also listen to the times, and we try to—without losing our folk traditions."

The Georgian State Dance Company winds up its three-month, twelve-city U.S. tour this month. The troupe will appear in New York City (August 16–September 4); Poughkeepsie (September 6–7); Trenton (September 8); Atlantic City (September 9–11); Orlando (September 13–14); Daytona Beach (September 15); and Clearwater, Florida (September 16–18). —*Harlow Robinson*

BLOCKBUSTER RADIO

Imagine an on-air production of *Babbitt* starring the likes of Ed Asner, Julie Harris, Richard Dreyfuss, Amy Irving, Stacy Keach, Marsha Mason, Judge Reinhold, Harry Hamlin, James Whitmore, Ally Sheedy, Michael York, and Roscoe Lee Brown.

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Frustrating? Certainly not to anyone who ever tuned in to "The Shadow," "Lux Radio Theater," or any of the other radio dramas of the 1930s and '40s. And not, apparently, to the many thousands of listeners who turned their dials to the Los Angeles public radio station KCRW last Thanksgiving Day to hear a fourteen-and-

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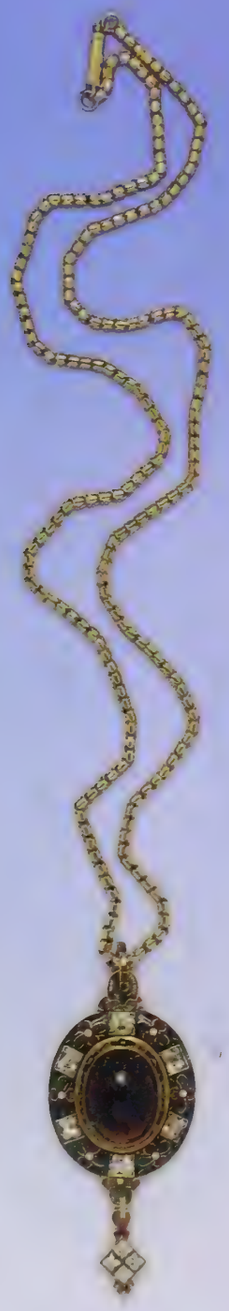

Fine enamel garnet and chrysolite pendant in the Holbeinesque taste, circa 1860, in original fitted case by Collingwood

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a-half-hour dramatic presentation of Sinclair Lewis's classic novel. "Who would have thought," marveled Dan Sullivan of the *Los Angeles Times*, "that one of the highlights of the theater year would be a radio show?"

KCRW's general manager, Ruth Hirschman, who coproduced *Babbitt* with L.A. Classic Theater Works, a fledgling but celebrity-heavy repertory company, is confident the production will play equally well to a national audience when it begins its serialized broadcast on public radio stations around the country, this October. "I think *Babbitt* will cause a sensation," she ventures. "It's fresh and energetic. It jumps up on the table and sings."

It just may have to, if the production is to break TV's stranglehold and whet America's appetite for radio drama. With the exception of golden-age radio classics aired on some commercial stations, the radio-drama scene is maddeningly catch-as-catch-can. National Public Radio beams "NPR Playhouse," a half hour of drama ranging from Beckett to space-age serials, to member stations five days a week, but not all, or even most, of those outlets broadcast the show regularly. "Programming consultants come in and tell stations that radio drama is audience poison," sighs the "NPR Playhouse" senior producer, Mary Lou Finnegan.

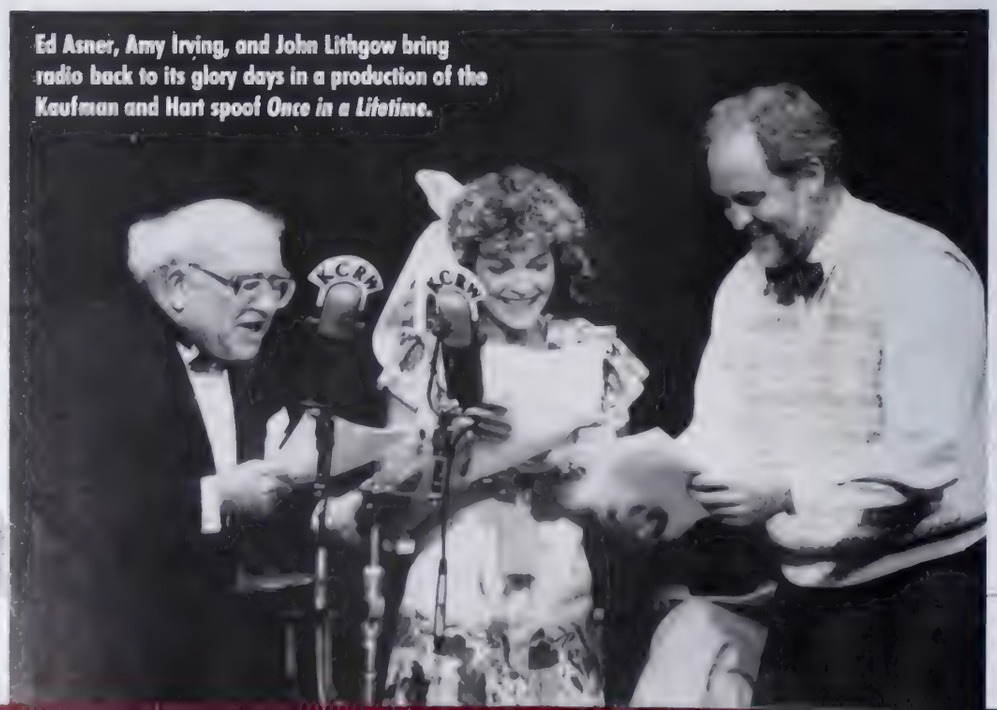
So, in a medium almost entirely given over to news, talk, and music, KCRW remains very much an exception, with its two hours of daily contemporary drama programming—some of it domestically produced but most imported from England, where the BBC still churns out a staggering 800 hours of drama a year. Still, radio listeners outside the Bay Area may be able to unearth dramatic nuggets if they are willing to look. This month, for instance, "NPR Playhouse" presents its Eugene O'Neill Centennial Radio Project, featuring four one-act dramas (the "Glencairn" plays) directed by the noted O'Neill interpreter Jose Quintero, as well as the two-part documentary "Jose Quintero Directs O'Neill," produced by the San Francisco radio-drama veteran Erik Bauersfeld. *Babbitt* comes along in October, and an ambitious dramatic rendering of *Madame Bovary*, produced by Seattle's Globe Radio Repertory Company, is slated for January 1989.

Check with your local NPR outlet for exact air dates and times. And while you've got them on the line, Ruth Hirschman suggests, you might say, "Give us more!" —*David Ruben*

TREVOR'S PINNACLE

When the early-music movement began, a couple of decades ago, its appeal was primarily in the sheer novelty of the sound. For all the revelations that period performances brought to the music, there was no getting around the fact that those twangy gut strings, raucous valveless horns, bleating oboes, and mellow wooden flutes simply sounded weirdly intriguing.

Then came Trevor Pinnock. Along with his English Concert chamber orchestra, the forty-one-year-old conductor and harpsichordist was one of the first early-music specialists to develop wide popularity without relying on the novelty of sound or scholarship. What made Pinnock's interpretations of Bach's *Brandenburg* Concertos, Handel's *Water Music*, and Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* stand out was not odd



Ed Asner, Amy Irving, and John Lithgow bring radio back to its glory days in a production of the Kaufman and Hart spoof *Once in a Lifetime*.

The door opened without warning.

The light from the hall chandelier, accented his finely-tailored suit.

"Pardon me," his blue eyes were set deep in a chiselled face, "but we seem to have been given the same hotel suite." He held out a room key in his open palm.

"Unfortunately," his expression recovered into a warm smile, "I'm afraid it's a mistake."

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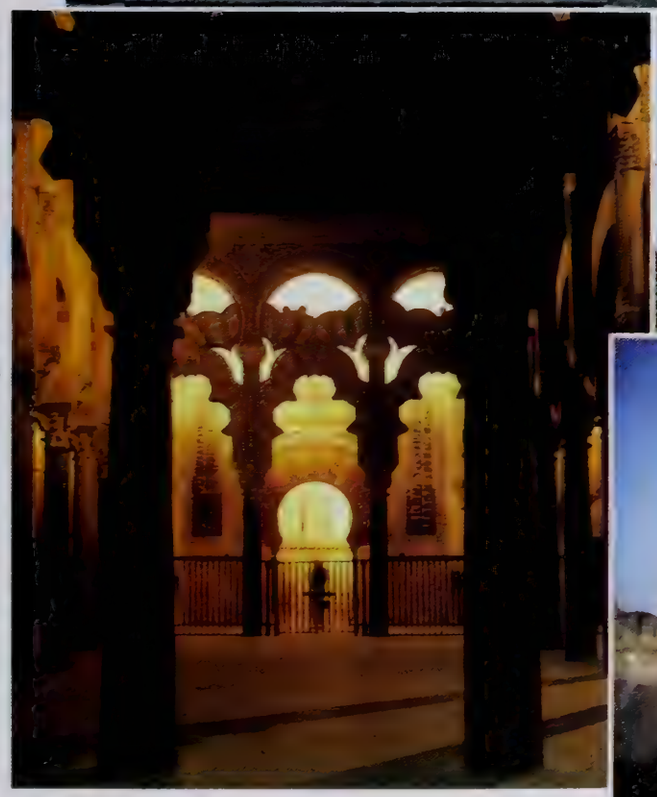

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CLIVE BARDA

Trevor Pinnock conducts *Giulio Cesare* at the Met.

noises or stuffy musicological point making but the sheer exuberance with which the music was performed.

Pinnock, like other stars of the early-music movement, has welcomed the opportunity to move into the mainstream. On September 27, Pinnock will bring his expertise to the Metropolitan Opera, where he will lead a new production of Handel's *Giulio Cesare*, starring Kathleen Battle and Tatiana Troyanos. Not only will this be the first time the Met—where baroque opera is rare enough in any form—will have worked with an early-music specialist; it will also be Pinnock's first crack at conducting an opera.

"I've served my apprenticeship with Handel's music," says Pinnock, who has recorded all of the eighteenth-century composer's orchestral music as well as a version of *Messiah* that is due out next month on the Archiv label. As for working with modern players who do not gladly adapt to the leaner style, all he asks is that they be open-minded: "We're only asking them to play music—not anything stranger than that." —*Mark Swed*

NOW WE ARE SIXTY-SIX

It is understandable if the librarians at the Central Children's Room at Manhattan's Donnell Library Center were a bit concerned one day last September. After all, inside the ordinary shopping bag that had just arrived sat five of the most important objects in twentieth-century children's literature—the original, stuffed-animal versions of Winnie-the-Pooh, Eeyore, Kanga, Tigger, and Piglet. Donated by John

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Pooh and his friends have a new home—so come and visit!

Macrae III, former president of E. P. Dutton, Pooh's American publisher, and John Dyson, the firm's former owner, the beloved quintet had come to take up permanent residence in the library.

The animals are absolutely authentic, the very stuffed toys that the author A. A. Milne's son Christopher Robin played with in Surrey, England, back in the 1920s. Their adventures and "expotitions" inspired four classic children's books, memorably illustrated by Ernest H. Shepard, that still charm millions of readers: *When We Were Very Young, Now We Are Six, Winnie-the-Pooh,* and *The House at Pooh Corner.*

Originally named Edward T. Bear, Pooh was purchased by the Milnes at Harrods as a first-birthday gift for their son. Eeyore, a Christmas present, loped onto the scene a few months later, followed by Kanga, Roo, Tigger, and Piglet. Roo, alas, is missing in action, having met with an uncertain fate in an apple orchard in the 1930s.

Love, not neglect, has worn and matted patches of Pooh's golden-tan fur and left the thighs of Eeyore, that chronic melancholic, a bit ragged. As for the diminutive Piglet, his snout had a rather inauspicious encounter with a dog some years ago, and Tigger's tail remains only tentatively attached to his striped body. But according to Elliott Graham, publicist emeritus at Dutton and the group's personal guardian for over forty years, nobody has ever cleaned the animals, because Milne wanted them to look as if a child had just finished playing with them.

For such a down-to-earth bear, Pooh has had his moments over the years. The Bear of Very Little Brain has inspired several books not penned by Milne but always accompanied by the original Shepard illustrations: a Latin translation, *Winnie Ille Pu,* the first book in a dead language to hit the best-seller lists; *The Pooh Cook Book* ("hunny" is a rather conspicuous ingredient); and even *Pooh's Workout Book,* a manual with stoutness exercises ("A bear, however hard he tries,/Grows tubby without exercise").

The animals' new address is 20 West Fifty-third Street. A word of advice: drop by for a *visit,* not a viewing—something the *New Yorker* recently discovered when it called to ask if the famous menagerie was "on display." —*Joni Miller*

DISCREET CHARM OF THE BAUBLERY

Hemlines and poufs are falling almost as rapidly as the Dow after Black Monday. In their place is what *Women's Wear Daily* has dubbed "quiet chic"—a new, pared-down sensibility of simplicity and restraint.

Mish Tworkowski and Mark Spirito are two young jewelry designers who have been working in the "quiet chic" mode all along. Mixing brushed mat gold with tinted

Top: A necklace and a bracelet by Mish Tworkowski. Bottom: Earrings and bracelet by Mark Spirito.

Vanden Plas began as a noble coachbuilding firm in 1884. It was a time when meticulous craftsmanship and exquisite luxury were hallmarks of the most elegant custom carriages. Today, these honored coachbuilding traditions are carried forward by Jaguar in the 1988 Vanden Plas.

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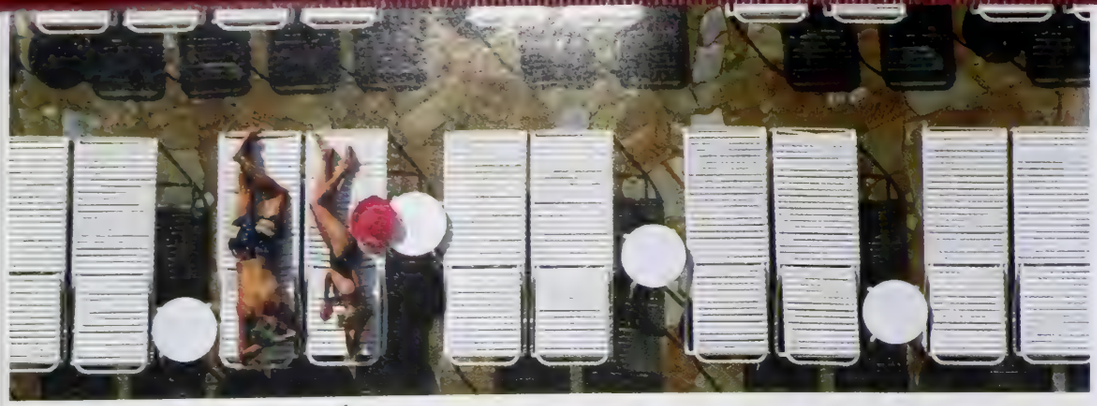

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glass, colored crystal, and semiprecious stones, both designers create classic pieces that possess an antique timelessness that does not go out of style. It is the kind of stuff your rich great-aunt loved.

Tworkowski, the head of the Sotheby's coin department as well as an expert in rock-and-roll memorabilia, incorporates eighteenth- and nineteenth-century architectural motifs into his eighteen-karat gold-plated pieces. He wittily translates the ceiling mount of a chandelier or the lyre back of a chair into earrings, a desk frieze into a necklace, or wall panels into a bracelet. The designer also mounts red, blue, or green antique glass beads on simple gold chains. His work is available at Barneys New York, Harvey Nichols in London, and Saks Jandel in Washington.

Spirito's vermeil jewelry (sterling silver dipped in twenty-four-karat gold) is composed of gold-brushed links and geometric shapes of semiprecious stones and colored *faux* crystals. For the designer, whose work is sold exclusively at Bergdorf Goodman, "the most important thing is working with color." Spirito comes up with some startling and beautiful combinations—a gold-link bracelet of rectangular and circular green, gray, and black stones, to give one example. —*Bart Boehlert*

Majolica Moderna

Paul Steinberg, the artist and stage designer, was passing by Barneys, in New York City, last year, when he was taken by the sumptuous designs displayed in the store's windows. He promptly marched inside, introduced himself, and asked where the collection of tin-glazed plates had been made. "I recognized that these were Italian-made ceramics, but I had never seen anything like them in Italy."

His impromptu visit eventually led him to the 500-year-old Grazia factory, in Deruta, Italy, where majolica ceramics originated and where artisans have been producing the richly patterned earthenware since medieval times. Majolica is created when a thick, white glaze is applied to earthenware, resulting in a dry, powdery base that is then painted by hand. The ancient process requires great skill and concentration, since the white powder absorbs color as quickly as a blotter soaks up ink, and erasures and retouches are impossible. The great advantage of the tin glaze, however, is that the brushed-on pigments do not shift, blur, or lose their gleaming intensity.

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CONNOISSEUR'S WORLD

develop contemporary majolica patterns, the Grazia factory began to commission and produce the designs of young American artists. The result has been a remarkable collaboration that has given the tradition-minded, old-world craft a definite new-world kick. Thanks to the playful designs of Steinberg, Dan Bleyer, Jackie Rice, and Paula Sweet, formal blue and yellow majolica patterns have exploded into multicolored carnivals of vivid con-

GEORGE MOTT (2)

Cup and saucer designed by Paul Steinberg, a pattern known as "Coco Lezzone"; at Barneys New York. Right: The Grazia ceramics factory, in Deruta, Italy.

fetti, galaxies of orbiting geometric forms, and broad-brushed black strokes on terracotta fields. Barneys plays an active role in the process by selecting artists' designs and color schemes.

Today, 90 percent of the Grazia factory's output is exported to the United States. "We nurture the old traditions," explains Ubaldo Grazia, proprietor of the workshop, "and at the same time, we make contemporary designs to meet newer tastes." The factory's bold new patterns may be found at Barneys, Gump's, Neiman Marcus, and several other large department stores across the country.

—Edward Colquhoun

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Is there a reasonable, neighborly restaurant handy to Broadway? Yes; Audrone's, at 342 West Forty-sixth Street—on the stretch known as Restaurant Row, a few doors down from Orso (superb, pricey, crowded) and across the street from Barbetta (fancified, overpriced, crowded).

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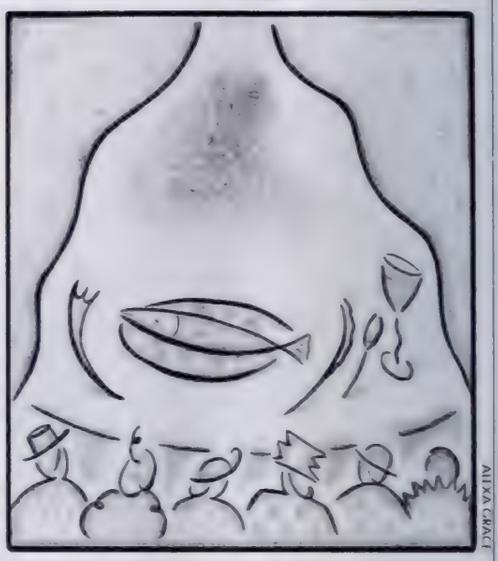
ALEXA GRACE

floors, mirrored columns, and staircase motifs give off a pleasant, do-it-yourself Aztec deco aura. The chef Cynthia Keller turns out lovingly prepared classics, enhanced with subtle accents of her own. Among the appetizers, the Cognac-cured gravlax and daily pasta specials are standouts. The main courses include impeccable gray sole meunière; succulent roast loin of lamb, served with refreshing minted cucumber spaghetti; and an osso buco tenderly simmered to mellow perfection. For dessert, the white-chocolate mousse jazzed up with cassis merits attention, but best of all is the cold raspberry soufflé. Satisfying as the fare is, it is light enough not to prompt any postprandial naps at the theater later on.

The damage, including drinks, an unpretentious wine, and tip, runs well below $100 for two—an outstanding value. Do not be surprised when you start coming back to Audrone's even if you are not headed for the theater. For reservations, call (212) 246-1960. —M.G.

SOMETHING IN THE AIR

In the Middle Ages, herbs, spices, and aromatics were used to ward off everything from memory loss to the plague. Modern chemistry pretty much put a stop to their medicinal use, and fragrances moved from the pharmacy to the perfumery and into the homes of the privileged. Ladies of the court of Louis XV were said to pin sachets of violet to their negligees and placed them in their armoires and chests. Potpourri, that sweetly scented blend of dried flowers and botanicals, had arrived.

Originally, a potpourri—the name is

The world is full of a number of things,

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I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings.

R. L. Stevenson

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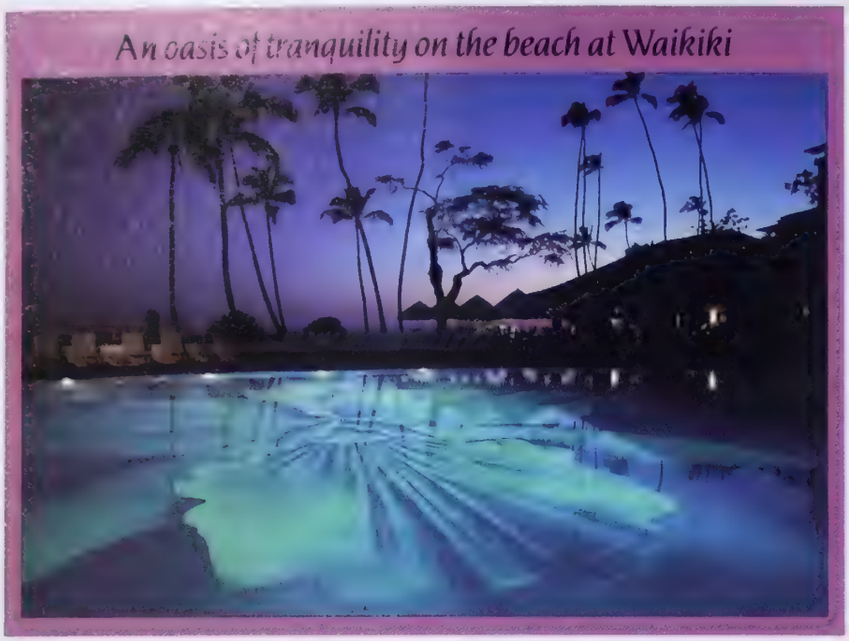

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derived from the French word for "rotted pot"—was composed simply of petals plucked from cottage gardens. Things are no longer so simple. Because the hybridized flowers of today have lost much of their scent, modern potpourris must be enhanced with essential oils.

Since 1983, Patti Upton, founder of

Fragrance

Aromatique, has been instrumental in getting potpourri out of the closet and into the living room as a fashionable accessory. An innovator in the blending and marketing of fragrance, Upton made her first potpourri by gathering fragrant items—everything from gum balls to acorns—lying about her Heber Springs, Arkansas, home and blending them in a cinnamon-citrus oil. She dubbed the aromatic concoction that resulted "The Smell of Christmas" and sold it from a friend's antiques shop.

"The Smell of Love," the most recent addition to the Aromatique collection, combines the fruits of extensive fragrance research with a glorious blend of robust botanicals—namely, peonies, hibiscus, wood curls, and laurel bay leaves. To duplicate the way a rose smells while it is still on the bush, researchers studied the molecular composition of its aroma, and it is the rose note that predominates in this quintessentially romantic potpourri.

—Jill Resnick

Edited by Robert Knafo

ROXANA VILLA

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On the homes

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On the views

Ever changing views are part of each MERIDIAN home. To the south, colorful sailboats glide by the yacht harbor marina. To the west, ocean vessels return from the sea while a setting sun bathes Point Loma in fiery spectacle. San Diego's expanding skyline sparkles both day and night. The mountains frame the sunrise to the east. Then, coming full circle to the south, the Coronado Islands dot the Pacific horizon.

On the amenities

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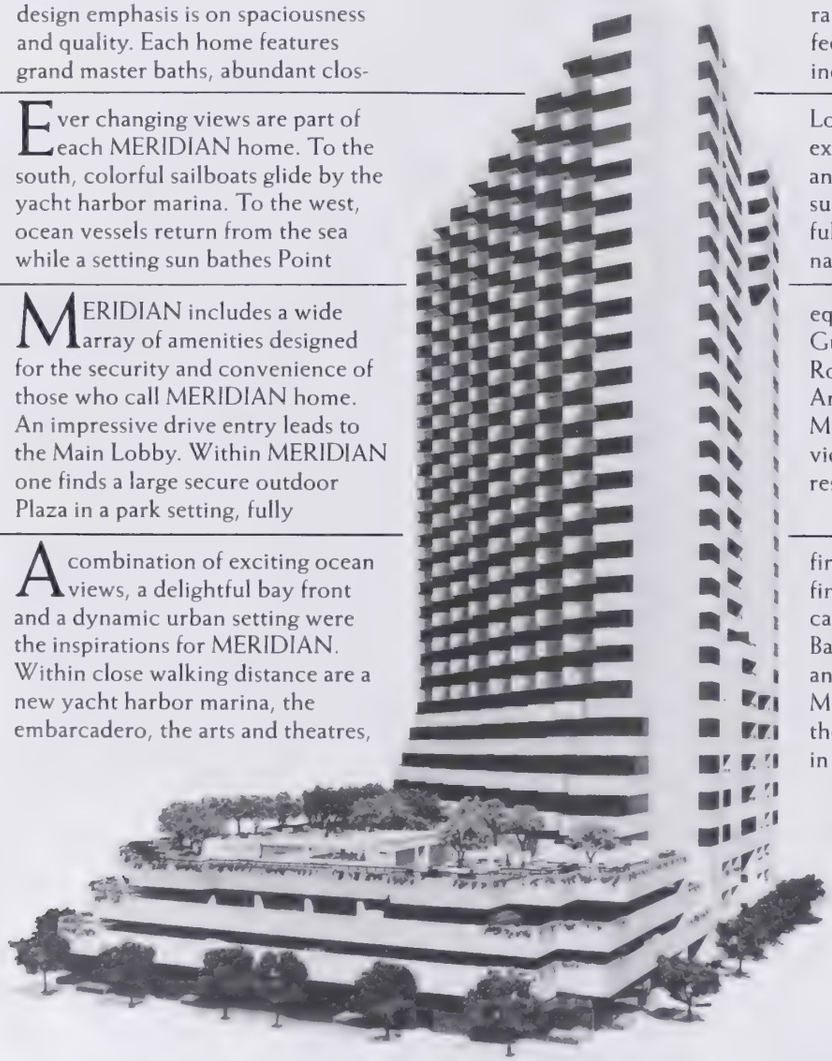

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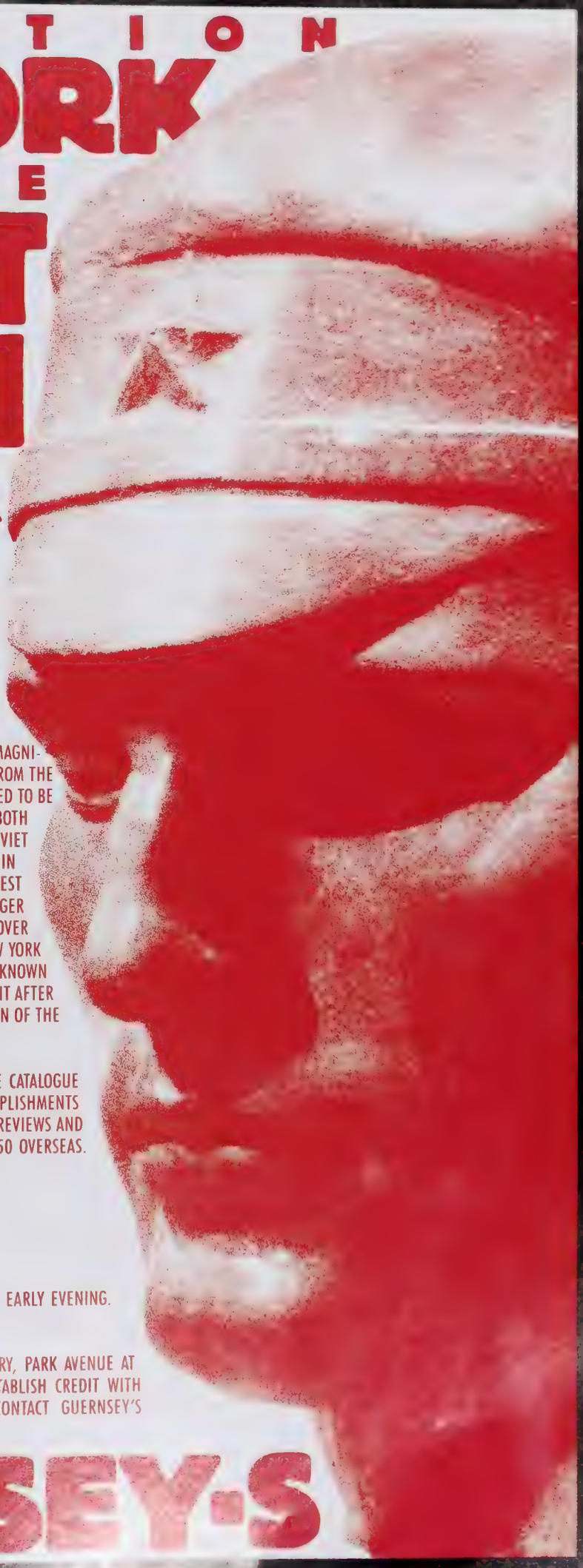
ARTWORK OF THE SOVIET UNION

NEW YORK OCTOBER 22★23



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THE CALENDAR: THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20. NOON TO 10PM PREVIEW
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21. 10AM TO 7PM PREVIEW
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22. 12 NOON AUCTION*
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 23. 12 NOON AUCTION*
*THE AUCTION ON BOTH DATES WILL EXTEND INTO THE EARLY EVENING. THE CATALOGUE DOCUMENTS THE ORDER OF SALE.

INFORMATION: ALL EVENTS WILL BE HELD AT THE 7TH REGIMENT ARMORY, PARK AVENUE AT 66TH STREET, NEW YORK, NY. PROSPECTIVE BIDDERS ARE URGED TO ESTABLISH CREDIT WITH GUERNSEY'S IN ADVANCE. FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT GUERNSEY'S 212-794-2280. 136 EAST 73RD STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10021

GUERNSEY'S

CHRISTIE'S GETS A NEW HEAD; THE FRENCH GIRD FOR '92; THE FALL SEASON LOOMS

Christie's launches the fall season with a new chairman, Lord Carrington, at the helm. He has a hard act to follow. The Christie's chairman for the last fourteen years, John A. Floyd, like his counterpart the late, great Sotheby's head Peter Wilson, is one of the dominating figures in the auction business. During Floyd's tenure (he will stay on as a nonexecutive director), Christie's enjoyed unparalleled success, lately growing at an even faster rate than its archrival Sotheby's. Some observers have seen in the selection of the outsider Carrington—a respected statesman and museum and corporate director, but with little relevant managerial or auction-world experience—a tacit admission that the existing in-house talent is pretty thin at the top. The more upbeat, official line is that Carrington's considerable international experience will keep Christie's abreast of the increasing internationalization of the auction market. Both houses are jockeying for positions in 1992, when, in theory, all remaining protective barriers to free trade among members of the EEC should fall. This means, for one thing, that the French auctioneers' protective monopoly will be lifted and the overly ripe French market opened directly to the globally dominant London–New York houses. If Carrington can successfully lead Christie's across the channel, then his appointment will surely have been inspired.

Meanwhile, in France, the Paris and regional associations of *commissaires-priseurs* (as auctioneers are known there) are hardly sitting by idly in the face of the expected invasions of 1992. The French scene is more than a little reminiscent of the [illegible] the

A 1921 Soviet propaganda plate; Christie's London.

COURTESY CHRISTIE'S LONDON (2)

Gustave de Smet canvas at Christie's London.

ized Paris-based houses, which apparently believe they can go it alone in a free-market future, have begun marketing their sales in the Anglo-American style.

Many of the smaller, specialist firms, which will have trouble going it alone, have begun to merge. Perhaps the most notably successful has been the Arcole group, formed by nine *commissaires-priseurs*, which scored a Fr 13 million tally ($2,120,717) in its inaugural sale, last March. The provincial houses, which in total topped $375 million in 1987, 6 percent more than their Paris-based brethren, are following suit (some of the new, hybrid firm names—like Martin–Desbenoit–Perrin–Royère–Lajeunesse—are enough to choke on). If current auction history is any guide, the English houses will see these provincial rooms as attractive targets for a takeover.

Another interesting recent development is the decision by Sotheby's to sponsor as well as sell contemporary decorative arts in London. In August we were treated to the Sotheby's **Decorative Arts Award Exhibition 1988,** billed as the first of a planned series of annual selling exhibitions, in London and Tokyo, of the best crafts work being done today. Sotheby's solicited, exhibited, and sold several hundred lots divided into six categories. Cash prizes were awarded to entrants. A handful of special items were flown to Tokyo for another sale.

Two months later, and not coincidentally, Sotheby's London will hold an inaugural sale of **ceramics by twentieth-century artists.** The emphasis in this October 19 session is on works by artists who also worked in clay—Derain, Dufy, Fontana, Jorn, Léger, and, of course, Picasso—a fairly narrow, if extremely neglected, field.

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[illegible] armchairs, ca. 1900, from the Elton John collection. Est.: £6,000–£10,000.

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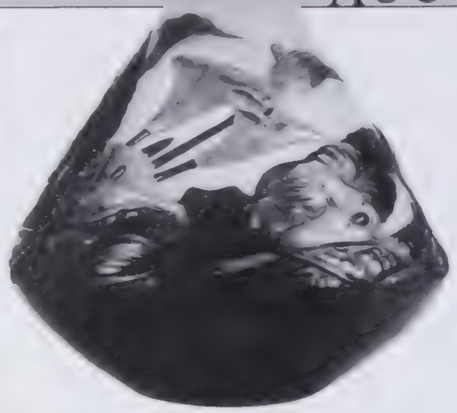

COURTESY CHRISTIE'S LONDON

Gallé calla lily vase at Christie's London.

More information on this next month.

In October, **Christie's East,** in New York, will offer 200 lots from the estate of Cecil B. DeMille. Christie's New York's real October biggie, on the fifteenth, is likely to be the first-rate **French furniture and decoration** from the Groves collection. In the same month Christie's London has three important events—an ambitious and fascinating sale of **Russian imperial art to propaganda,** on the sixth, a pioneering sale of **modern Belgian paintings** (which may surprise by its strength), on the twentieth, and the second installment of the fabulous **Bushell collection of netsuke,** on the eighteenth.

On November 18, Christie's and New York's Swann Galleries will kick off a multisession dispersal of the private **library and collections of the late John F. Fleming,** one of the premier booksellers of the last several decades and a protégé of the fabled A. S. W. Rosenbach, arguably the top man in this field. Phillips's venue on November 30 and December 1 is Toronto, where the long-defunct Phillips Ward-Price operation (the offspring of a Phillips acquisition in the seventies) will try to get things going again with a sale of **European paintings**.

Butterfield & Butterfield will open its splendid new Los Angeles salerooms with television hookups for sales between San Francisco and Los Angeles. This November opening represents another giant step forward for the California house and should give the big boys pause over how long they can continue to ignore the burgeoning "eastern Pacific" market.

London—Sotheby's, September 6–9. The Elton John collections. If you have been in Tokyo, Sydney, New York, or Los Angeles this summer, you have perhaps run into the preview tour of selected items from this smorgasbord, formed over the last twenty years by the "guru of glitz." The sale will consist of multiple sessions devoted to stage costumes and memorabilia, art deco and contemporary jewelry, and art nouveau and art deco glass and furniture by all the right names, and five sessions to "diverse collections," which means paintings, prints, sculptures, and something called "fantasmagoria"—in other words, just about everything else. The 2,000-plus items are estimated to top £3 million, which certainly should give Mr. John (did you know his middle name is Hercules?) a substantial start in his avowed goal of "changing direction."

A great deal of the material is fairly obvious "big name" stuff, testimony more to John's cash than to his connoisseurship. Along with the silly, there are some spectacular individual pieces, particularly in the art nouveau section, including a lovely salon suite with tapestry coverings by Dufy, some handsome English art nouveau silver, and a rare and superb 1890 Morris and Co. hand-knotted Hammersmith carpet. (P.S.: If you have money or appetite for this sort of loot, stick around until the twelfth, when Sotheby's has its huge, multiowner **rock-'n'-roll** sale.)

THE PARIS HOUSES HAVE BEGUN AGGRESSIVELY MARKETING THEIR SALES IN THE ANGLO-AMERICAN STYLE.

New York—William Doyle Galleries, September 14. Belle Époque. Why quibble with success? This popular sale category (there are four sales under this name this year) seems to embrace everything from William IV forward, although where it stops is often difficult to pinpoint. In the last outing at Doyle, the top lot was a William IV bookcase, which sold for $15,000. This edition features a section of Gallé glass. Expect keen bidding: the Gallé should attract great interest from the Japanese, who seem drawn to this field.

Finally, two smaller offerings at Christie's South Kensington and Bonhams in London. On the twenty-third, Christie's will hold its second annual **maritime** sale; it promises to top last season's enormous success. The works may be predictable by type—paintings, watercolors, models, navigational instruments, and related items—but are nonetheless often singularly beautiful. On the thirtieth, Bonhams will present **European ceramics,** featuring several marvelous groupings: for example, some fifty Georgian and early-Victorian pastel burners. —*James R. Lyons*

AT AUCTION

THE ORIGINAL COLLECTION OF PLASTERS & BRONZES FROM ROMAN BRONZE WORKS

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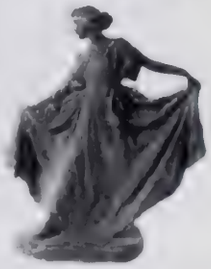

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THE CALENDAR:
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15. 12 NOON-10PM
PREVIEW
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 16. 10AM-10PM
PREVIEW
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17. 12 NOON.
AUCTION

INFORMATION: THE EVENT WILL BE HELD AT THE 7TH REGIMENT ARMORY, PARK AVENUE AT 66TH STREET, NEW YORK, NY. PROSPECTIVE BIDDERS ARE URGED TO ESTABLISH CREDIT WITH GUERNSEY'S IN ADVANCE. FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT GUERNSEY'S, 212-794-2280. 136 EAST 73RD STREET, NEW YORK NY 10021.

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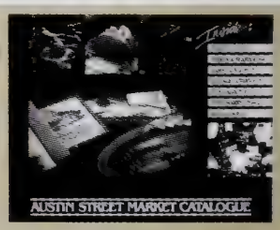

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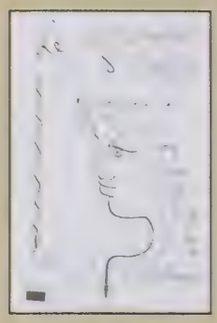

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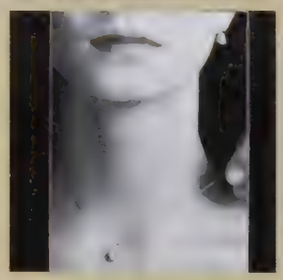

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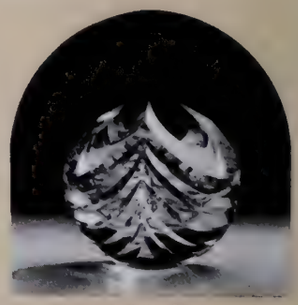

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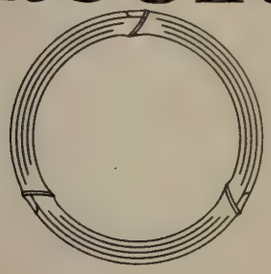

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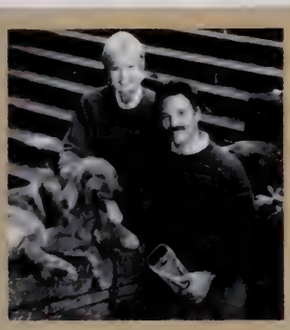

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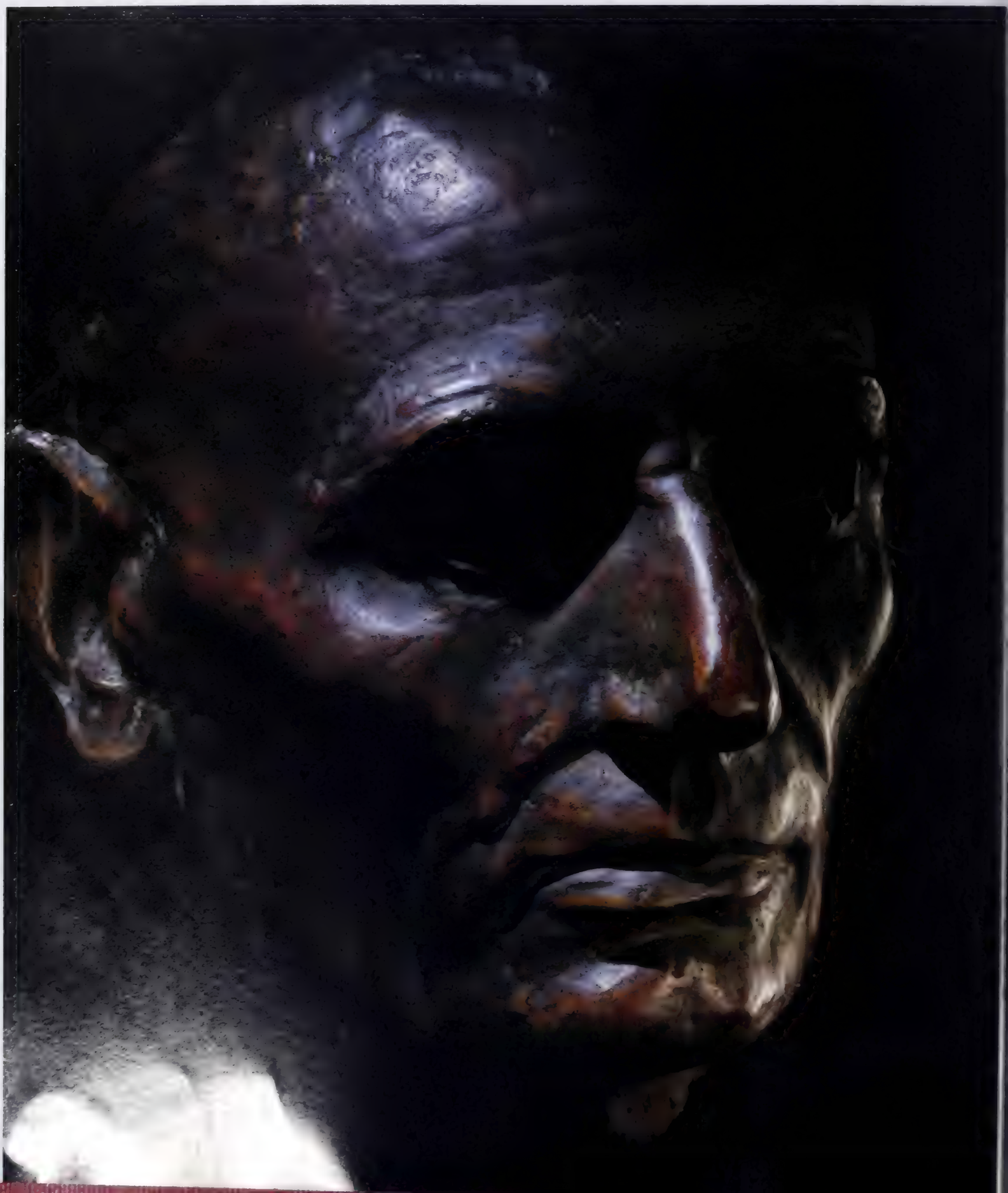

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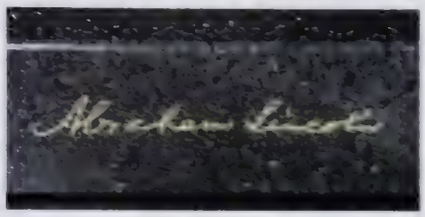

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C-9

THE RISE OF MORGAN FREEMAN

BY ANN RAY MARTIN

JANET SASAWA

Unforced dignity: Morgan Freeman back on Broadway for *The Gospel at Colonus*.

One night in Madison, Wisconsin, where he was appearing as a dancer in the chorus of the national touring company of *The Royal Hunt of the Sun*, Morgan Freeman got to go on in the speaking part of an Inca general. "Being onstage and talking, it was like this bomb went off—this explosive realization that I had been off the track," Freeman recalls now. "I thought, '*This* is what I do. This is where I have power, total control, where I can make a mark.'"

That was twenty-two years ago. In the meantime, Freeman, now fifty-one, has made his mark many times over. His power as an actor has grown to the point where in the past two [illegible] months alone he has been nominated for the Academy Award, won Off Broadway's Obie (his third), and starred in a Broadway musical. His first starring movie role is in *Lean On Me*, directed by John Avildsen and scheduled to open around Christmas. The recent performances demonstrate Freeman's range as well as his talent. As the pimp Fast Black in *Street Smart*, the part that not only won him an Oscar nomination for best supporting actor but three film critics' awards, Freeman was smooth as velvet and sharp as steel. In one memorable scene, he terrorized a prostitute with a pair of scissors. Decked out in about a thousand dollars' worth of designer threads and flashing a gold tooth, he turned around and had a party full of New York journalists eating out of his hand in the next. It was sheer bravura.

His Obie-winning role in the Off-Broadway hit *Driving Miss Daisy* showed the other end of his spectrum. As Hoke, the elderly chauffeur to the even more elderly and crotchety Atlanta matriarch Miss Daisy, the tall, slim actor, who could easily pass for forty, captured the encroachments of age with a minimum of makeup and a maximum of insight. Alfred Uhry's Pulitzer Prize–winning play covers a quarter of a century. Over the years, the two central characters, brought together by unrelated necessities, come to feel respect and a deep, unspoken affection. The danger of sentimentality was ever present, but the performers never fell prey to it. Whether patiently overlooking Miss Daisy's semiconscious bigotries or craftily concealing his inability to read before graciously accepting her tutoring, Freeman informed every scene with unforgettable dignity.

Dignity may be the quality most often cited when critics describe Freeman. John Simon, *New York* magazine's notoriously acerbic drama critic, deemed his work in *Miss Daisy* a "magnificent performance." When the monumental musical *The Gospel at Colonus*, with Freeman reprising his Obie-winning role, recently came to Broadway after dazzling audiences around the world for four years, Simon dismissed the blending of Greek tragedy and black gospel as a "sorry mythcegenation" yet still had praise for its star. "Morgan Freeman," he declared, "even rises above it with his unforced dignity of voice and bearing."

"Simon likes me fine," Freeman notes, "when I'm playing a colored man." One of the rare pans Freeman has suffered was a lambasting from Simon on the occasion of the New York Shakespeare Festival's *Coriolanus* in 1979. "Basically, he felt blacks couldn't handle Shakespeare," Freeman remembers, "couldn't speak the language." But Freeman won an Obie for his portrayal of the title role.

Freeman has been collecting awards since he was twelve. "You can talk about your Academy Awards, but this was major

***Street Smart*. The suave pimp Fast Black snows a publishing big shot (Andre Gregory).**

COURTESY CANNON FILMS

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COURTESY THE CHILDREN'S TELEVISION WORKSHOP

Freeman underemployed as Easy Reader on PBS's kid show "The Electric Company."

BOB MARSHAK/VISIONS

Opposite Dana Ivey, as the original Miss Daisy, Freeman aged a quarter century.

GEORGE E. JOSEPH

For his portrayal of Shakespeare's Coriolanus, Freeman copped his first Obie.

major," he says, displaying with delight the small gold pin he won in a Mississippi acting contest in 1950. After a childhood in Mississippi, with brief, unhappy sojourns in Chicago, he entered the air force. Why? "Because I wanted to fly." But at the Biloxi air base they made him a radar mechanic instead.

By the time he was discharged, in 1959, he had recognized that he did not really want to be a fighter pilot, "a hired killer," and that his "romantic ideas of strafing and bombing" all came from the movies. "The first time I sat in a fighter plane," he says, "I figured out that this is *real;* there wasn't even any place to mount a camera." So he went where the cameras were: to Hollywood. When he could not get past the studio gates, he took a clerical job at Los Angeles City College, where he also studied drama. Then he came to New York to be on the stage. Another bust. Next, it was to San Francisco, where Freeman began dancing and getting "off the track," until that epiphanic moment in Wisconsin six years later.

Reestablishing New York as his home base, Freeman began working steadily in regional and Off-Broadway theater. In the 1967 play *The Niggerlovers,* by George Tabori, he got what he still regards as his first real acting lesson. "I was onstage with a real actor," says Freeman. That actor was Stacy Keach. For his part, Keach recalls, "There was no question Morgan had a tremendous [illegible] and [illegible] just a matter of good fortune and tenacity and he was going to make it big."

The pieces fell into place—eventually. After *The Niggerlovers,* Freeman picked up further credits on Broadway (in *Hello, Dolly!,* with Pearl Bailey) and in Boston (in Brecht's *Jungle of Cities,* with Michael Moriarty), only to wind up on the educational-television series "The Electric Company," with Bill Cosby and Rita Moreno, which gave him a success that could have finished him. As a cool-dude motorcyclist named Easy Reader, he became a national hero to the preteen set. But by the show's fourth year, frustrated at being typecast, Freeman started coming in late, unprepared, not knowing his lines. "I got very upset with him—the way a sister would," recalls Moreno. "I told him, 'You're not being responsible.' Morgan's a very proud guy and he didn't say anything. But about a month later he said, 'You were right.' "

Yet Freeman's willingness to accept criticism has impressed his colleagues. Frances Sternhagen, who joined him earlier this year in *Driving Miss Daisy,* nine months into the play's run, recalls that shortly before Freeman was scheduled to leave the cast the director told him to "take out the excess air." "Some actors could really get into a tantrum," Sternhagen says, "but Morgan did exactly what had been asked—and nothing was lost. Afterward he said, 'I hate self-indulgent actors, so if I was being self-indulgent, I decided, okay, I'll take the air out.' "

Such resilience has come through an actor's inevitable ups and downs. When Freeman left "The Electric Company," in 1976, he could not find work, and his nine-year marriage to Jeanette Bradshaw had fallen apart. A year later he met the costume designer Myrna Colley-Lee, who was to become his second wife; and then he won a Tony nomination for his portrayal of a wino in Richard Wesley's 1978 Broadway play *The Mighty Gents,* but the play closed after six days.

Out of work again and "in shock," Freeman got an unexpected call from José Ferrer, asking him to costar Off-Broadway in a two-character play. "This man was a deity to me for his work in *Cyrano de Bergerac,*" says Freeman, and of course he accepted. Although *White Pelicans,* Jay Broad's existential drama of veterans of the Alaska gold rush, ran only a few weeks Off-Broadway, Ferrer feels today that it was a critical step. "Morgan had to grapple with something that seemed slightly foreign to him and then make it a part of himself."

There have been a few disappointments since. After making it to Broadway, *Gospel* closed after just sixty-one performances. The box office was fair, not disgraceful, but the cast was huge (sixty-four), and the numbers simply did not balance. Mostly, though, Freeman has been on a roll: there have been Joseph Papp productions of the classics; major made-for-TV movies; and, in 1980, his first feature film, *Brubaker.*

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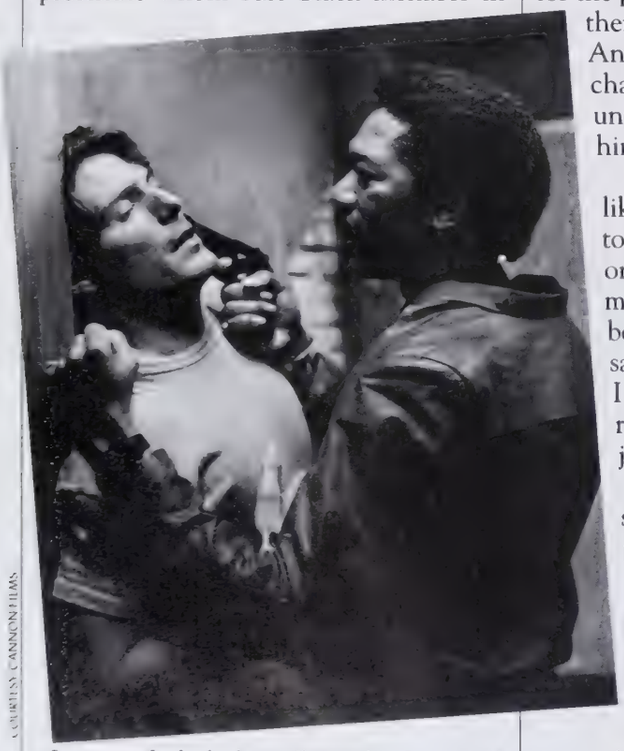
Constantly broadening his range, Freeman moved on to work in the movie *Eyewitness*, with William Hurt and Sigourney Weaver; the American Place Theatre production of Ronald Ribman's *Buck*; and even the soap opera "Another World." While Freeman was touring the country in *The Gospel at Colonus*, he squeezed in a TV movie and two feature films. "When it rains it pours," he laughs. "The trick is to get as many buckets as you can handle."

One of the actor's unlikeliest assignments came in 1984, in Paul Newman's movie *Harry and Son*. When Freeman came to read, the part he had been called for had already been cast. "But after talking with Morgan I just wanted him in the film," Newman says. "There was this character named Siemanowski—a Polish shop foreman—and I asked Morgan to play it. Why not? He's some kick in the ass; he's got fire and he's got smarts. And he's got sensible actor's courage, meaning that he's not afraid to hang it out, but his courage can be molded, shaped, used."

Kathy Baker, who played Punchy, the prostitute whom Fast Black menaces in *Street Smart*, has seen that controlled power close up. Even with sharp scissors flashing back and forth an eyelash away from her eyes, Baker says, she felt completely confident. "I knew Morgan would do exactly what he had to do and take care of [illegible] remembers, [illegible] with Christopher ("Superman") Reeve prominent among them, were all sitting around a table. Reeve was playing the starring role of Jonathan, a smarmy, yuppie magazine writer. "We were just reading through the script," she says, "nobody really 'acting,' and we get to the scene where Fast Black put a gun to Jonathan's head. Morgan *lunges* across the table, grabs Chris's shirt, and delivers some line like 'Listen, you mother!' with all the intensity of the final performance." When Freeman is in character, sometimes even other professionals may forget that he is just acting.

Off camera, Reeve and Freeman became buddies. On the professional level, Reeve was fascinated to watch his friend's uncanny transformations into this monstrous character, especially when Freeman and his family drove up to Montreal, where much of the movie was shot. "They had maps spread out in the front seat, and a picnic basket in the back," Reeve says. "They looked like tourists. Two hours later Morgan was playing Fast Black. First he got his nails done—he wore his nails long for the part, to show he didn't work—and then he put in the gold false tooth. And, gradually, his body language changed—and an air of danger and unpredictability would come over him."



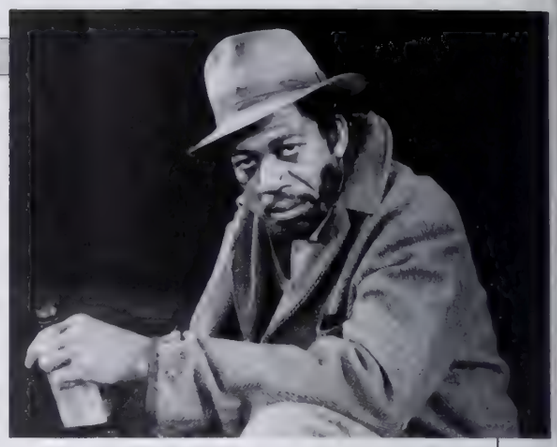
COURTESY CANNON FILMS

Superman feels the heat. Christopher Reeve and Morgan Freeman in *Street Smart*.

How did he pull it off? Freeman likes to quote Peter Yates, his director in *Eyewitness*. "He would say, 'It's only a movie.' I liked that: that means we're all professionals; nobody is trying to damage us. In the same vein, when people ask me how I 'research' a role, I tell them, 'No research—I'm not going to *be* it, just act it.' "

Freeman keeps his actor's tools sharp by constantly observing people. "We can be walking down the street," says his wife, Myrna, "and all of a sudden someone will catch Morgan's eye and he'll start walking like them or talking like them—trying it on." In *The Gospel at Colonus*, Freeman cemented the "cathartic and religious" bond between Greek drama and southern revival preaching by recalling Saturday nights down home in Mississippi at the Sanctified church. His memories were also essential to *Driving Miss Daisy*. The relationship of blacks and whites down South was like a dance, he says, and "they all knew the steps."

But at the core of all Freeman's work, as with most great actors, is his integrity. Perhaps *Miss Daisy*'s playwright, Alfred Uhry, sums up the essences best. "Morgan informs his work with a combination of gentility and sensitivity and lightning intelligence and also a wonderful, solid virility. The only other actor I know who projected that was Spencer Tracy." Freeman had better keep those buckets ready. □



***The Mighty Gents*: great performance, short run.**

FREEMAN ON VIDEO

Six feature films with Morgan Freeman have been released so far; all are available on videocassette. *Street Smart* (1987) features Freeman in his award-winning role as the mesmerizing pimp Fast Black, locked in a deadly battle of wits with a magazine writer (Christopher Reeve) who has fabricated a story about a Times Square pimp. *Brubaker* (1980) stars Robert Redford as a warden set on reforming a corrupt prison. Freeman's cameo appearance as a death-row prisoner prompted the *New Yorker* film citic Pauline Kael to wonder rhetorically, "Is Morgan Freeman the greatest American actor?" (His work in *Street Smart* convinced her that he probably is.)

Eyewitness (1981) would be terrific even without Freeman. Directed by Peter Yates and starring William Hurt and Sigourney Weaver, it is a neat example of the murder–foreign-intrigue genre. Freeman does engaging work as a perceptive veteran police detective.

Harry and Son (1984), about the midlife crisis of a construction worker, feels like a home movie. Paul Newman, directing as well as starring, got a lot of wonderful folks to drop by: Joanne Woodward, Ellen Barkin, Wilford Brimley, Judith Ivey, Robby Benson, Ossie Davis—and Morgan Freeman, in a ripsnorting cameo as a shop foreman named Siemanowski. *That Was Then, This Is Now* (1985) is a convoluted buddy-disaster number written by and starring Emilio Estevez. Freeman's featured role as a bar owner who does his best to be a father figure to the young losers gives the film its few watchable moments. *Marie* (1985) recounts the true-life struggle of Marie Ragghianti (played by Sissy Spacek) to bring down a rotten administration in Tennessee. Despite good billing, Freeman has a nothing part. For Freeman fans, negligible. —A.R.M.

Ann Ray Martin is a free-lance writer who lives in New York.

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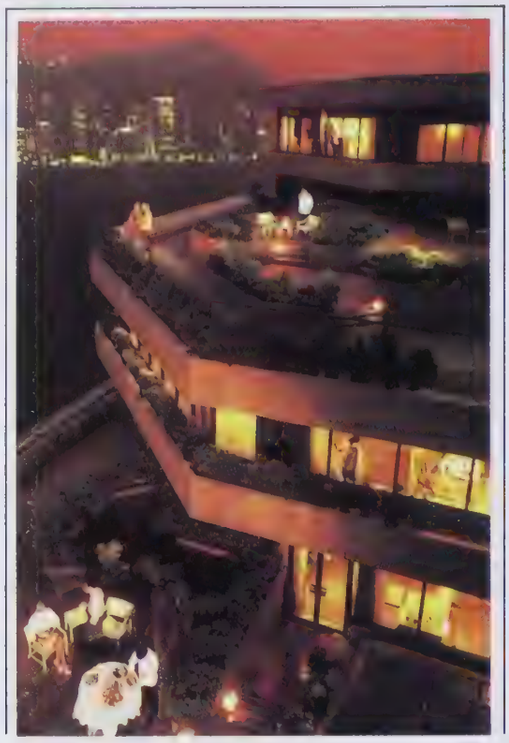

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INSIDER'S WASHINGTON

Informed, perspicacious people keep telling us that Washington, D.C., is becoming—or, indeed, has already become—a major center of culture. Well, we have investigated the claim, and it just is not so. Yes, Washington has a great deal to recommend it—the following pages celebrate the city—but, culturally, it is hardly a leader. We know well that there are plenty of fine museums, each with its modicum of marvels; the symphony orchestra is quite good; and many outstanding groups of performing artists dutifully make a stop in the nation's capital. But that is not enough.

The truth, alas, is that Washington's cultural boom has stalled. To get started, it depended on such confident, vigorous visionaries as Paul Mellon, Roger Stevens, and S. Dillon Ripley. When these men slowed down and retired, the cultural balloon lost its lift.

We do not know why no one has been able to take their places. Maybe part of the answer lies in Washington's institutionalized blandness: residents all seem to wear one kind of uniform or another; the architecture stays within the short

spectrum of safe mediocrity; the avenues are much too wide. It takes an irrepressible doer to buck the pervading conformism, and, evidently, such a person comes along all too rarely.

Washington, D.C., will of course survive. It is by virtually any measure a nice city, now that air-conditioning is ubiquitous, and exudes a spirit of generosity. It is also full of wonderful places. Most are well known to the public: the marble monuments, the flowering parks, the imposing seats of bureaucracy and governance. In addition, we found other spots, with the aid of Ina Ginsburg, a Washington-based writer who helped plan this issue, that are unknown except to the cognoscenti, unvisitable except by invitation, and worthy of the connoisseur's attention.

The Senators Dining Room is a good case in point. All you need to get in is an invitation from, and the company of, a United States senator. The room has high ceilings, perfect proportions, and tables of a comfortable size. If the food tends to be heavy—white-bean soup and cornbread are specialties—that is not what you came for. Nor are the works of art on the

walls very interesting. You will enjoy seeing the famous politicians and their guests.

Similarly, a VIP tour might include, if you have no tendency to vertigo, the climb to the heights of the Capitol rotunda. A steep, narrow, winding stairway with a seemingly unsubstantial rail leads up some 180 feet (the equivalent of fifteen stories) to a balustrade under the Capitol dome. There, you can have a close view of the ceiling frescoes, painted by Constantino Brumidi in 1865, depicting the apotheosis of George Washington. Looking down, you will see a frieze of American history, carved-sandstone walls with fluted pilasters and neoclassical motifs, and, at the bottom, tourists, looking tiny at such a distance, standing on the polished freestone floor. Permission to make the climb is hard to get unless you are sponsored by a congressman willing to accompany you all the way; it comes from the Office of the Architect of the Capitol. The trip down, you should know, is much scarier than the ascent.

Which, come to think of it, is the perfect metaphor for life in Washington, D.C.

THE V.I.P. TOUR

Washington, D.C., is full of marvels, many of which are reserved for special guests. Here is a sampling of what a few people take for granted.

By Ina Ginsburg

ANTIQUES OF STATE

Coming off the elevator and into the entrance hall, one sees two imposing, rotund pieces: an elegantly columned, bombé desk-and-bookcase by the Massachusetts cabinetmaker Benjamin Frothingham, Jr., dated 1753; and a bombé serpentine-front chest of drawers with ornate rococo chased handles, made in Boston about 1770, an even more outstanding example of American colonial cabinetry. They are harbingers of the splendors to come: scores of choice examples of Philadelphia Chippendale and Queen Anne, New York Federal and New England colonial furniture; canvases by a veritable who's who of colonial-era artists, as well as a number of fine examples of Hudson River–school landscapes. There are also exquisite pieces of eighteenth-century porcelain, silver, and glass from the same periods.

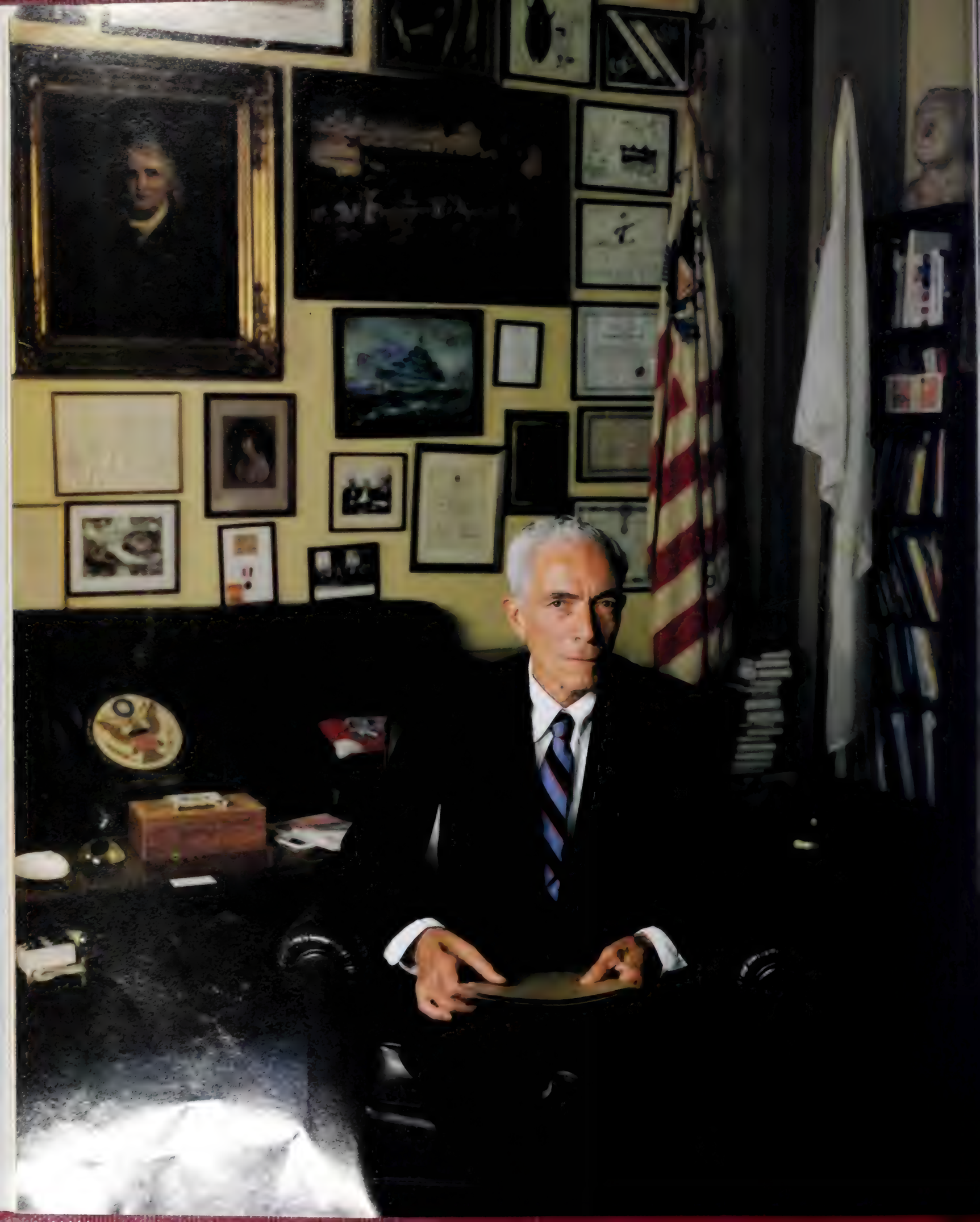
All these treasures adorn the Reception Rooms and office suites on the seventh and eighth floors of the State Department Building, the rather unlikely site of what its curator, Clement E. Conger, hails as the "third-finest collection of American decorative arts in the country" (after those at Winterthur and the Metropolitan Museum of Art). There is no reason to argue over the characterization; one could even improve on it and call the Department of State's the best *displayed* collection of its kind in the country. The Reception Rooms and office suites are among the finest examples of neoclassical-revival interior architecture in the land. Especially notable are the two rooms pictured on these pages: the eighth-floor Benjamin Franklin State Dining Room, designed by the Philadelph[illegible]

Photographs by [illegible]

completed in 1985—a sumptuous, columned, 100-by-47-foot room in which state dinners are held; and, on the same floor, the James Madison State Dining Room, designed in 1982–83 by the architect Walter Macomber of Washington—which is reserved for the sole use of the secretary of state. What makes these and the thirty-one other lavishly designed and decorated rooms all the more unexpected and remarkable is that they are among the most inconspicuous of Washington's cultural treasures, discreetly tucked away within the otherwise utterly nondescript, late-fifties building that houses the State Department.

The general public can enter only a handful of the rooms: these include the eighth-floor entrance hall and the Benjamin Franklin State Dining Room (for reservations, contact the Tour Office of the State Department, at 202-647-3241). But substantial contributors can expect as thorough a tour of the place as any foreign minister or other official visiting dignitary; Clement Conger will likely see to it personally.

It is he who has been overseeing the growth of the collection since 1961. Conger was in charge of entertainment in the State Department protocol office during the Eisenhower administration, when the new building was being put up. The General Services Administration, displaying a lack of taste that still pains him over a quarter century later, commissioned the decor of the reception rooms from a firm that designed them to look, he says, "like a motel or worse—wall-to-wall carpet over concrete floors, ugly acoustical-tile ceilings, drinking fountains." In 1961, the



wife of the secretary entered the rooms hours before a reception and dinner held in honor of Queen Frederika of Greece. Touring the new rooms, Mrs. Christian Herter, who had been growing distressed at the thought of receiving the queen in such surroundings, finally arrived in the ladies' lounge, with its atomic-era furnishings, and thereupon burst into tears. Virginia gentleman that he is, Conger promptly stanched the lady's anguish by volunteering to launch a campaign to refurnish the State Department's Reception Rooms.

Clement Conger recently snagged a rare late-eighteenth-century Charleston linen press, now adorning the west reception area, at a Philadelphia antiques fair—part of his recent effort to build up a relatively weak aspect of the collection, southern-colonial furniture. He vividly remembers spending $55,000 of C. Douglas Dillon's money in 1969 at Sotheby's, beating out the Metropolitan Museum of Art for the bombé chest. (Dillon is among the legions of benefactors who, out of civic-mindedness and/or for a hefty tax writeoff, have given a total of nearly $14 million and some 4,000 pieces of American art and antiques.)

The James Madison State Dining Room, pictured here, is one of those rooms at State that are usually never seen by the public. Its numerous treasures include a Salem Hepplewhite breakfront, circa 1790, that contains a goodly number of the department's best silver pieces, and an alabaster bas-relief of President Madison by Giuseppe Ceracchi, made in 1792. Those who dine here are seated on eagle-carved Salem side chairs, made about 1800–10 and used on America's first private yacht, *Cleopatra's Barge*, owned by George Crowninshield. Madison visited the yacht frequently when George's son, Benjamin, was his secretary of the navy. As Conger is sure to point out to the lucky visitor, James Madison almost certainly sat here.

DESIGN BY PELL

Everyone in Congress has quarters in the various House and Senate office buildings, but just ranking senators and congressmen have claim to the seventy-five or so "hideaway" offices in the Capitol Building itself. Scattered through the building and identified only by numbered doors, they have been among the most coveted perks on the Hill since the early days of the Republic. "Life begins at S. 40," says one formerly hideaway-less senator, referring to the Senate seniority-ranking system that determines who gets which precious Capitol square footage (John Stennis, the most senior of all, is "S. 1").

A lot of hideaway stories have to do with the workings of oversize political egos. When he was a Senate leader, LBJ amassed a fiefdom of seven hideaways over two floors of the Capitol, a spread so big that it was dubbed the Johnson Ranch East. H. 128, Sam Rayburn's hideaway when he was Speaker, became renowned as a clubby sanctum where top Democratic leaders would drop by to chew the fat after a long day on the floor (it is now a humble conference room).

A hideaway, in other words, is what the occupant chooses to make of it. Daniel Webster, the great midnineteenth-century senator from Massachusetts, stocked and sampled a princely wine collection in his Capitol office, what is now Senator Patrick Leahy's hideaway. The one Jesse Helms occupies—formerly Ted Kennedy's—is where the North Carolina senator retreats to write. It is a place of privacy, a haven from the constant assault of visitors, constituents, staff, and phone calls in the main office. To be asked to a hideaway is a sign of special favor; most people do not know that these offices even exist.

Senator Claiborne Pell has had a handsome hideaway for ten of his twenty-eight years in the Senate. Comfortably if unremarkably furnished with a leather sofa and club chairs, the senator's desk, and a few other pieces of furniture (all [illegible] issue, courtesy of the Architect's Office of the Architect), and adorned, as is the rest of the Capitol, on the cross-vaulted ceiling with murals by Constantino Brumidi, the Pell hideaway is a historical showcase, filled to the brim with reminders of the Rhode Island senator's illustrious forebears. As Washington political interior decoration goes, it is unrivaled.

Among the dozens of items of Pell-family memorabilia is the parchment proclamation, dated 1804 and signed by President Thomas Jefferson, nominating William Claiborne of Tennessee, one of Pell's prominent ancestors, as governor of "Orleans" (the Louisiana Purchase). Another is the portrait of George Mifflin Dallas, vice-president in the Polk administration and a great-grand-uncle of the senator. From a paneled wall, a portrait of Herbert Pell, a former congressman, minister to Portugal and Hungary, and renowned gastronome, looks down on his son; hanging on the wall, in a little glass case, as proudly displayed as a sculpture by a master, is the spaghetti fork he invented.

PATRON AT HOME

Once a year, visitors can wander in, past the Buddhas that guard the front door and into the cool serenity of the Kreeger mansion, a vast, domed-ceiling travertine-marble house-*cum*-museum designed by Philip Johnson in the midsixties. Docents from the Corcoran Gallery hover about, helping the public interpret what is perhaps the finest collection of modern art in Washington, D.C., still in private hands—an eclectic trove of Impressionist, Postimpressionist, and early- to late-twentieth-century paintings and sculptures, collected over the last thirty years by David and Carmen Kreeger.

Having made a fortune in insurance in the fifties, David Lloyd Kreeger transformed himself into that increasingly rare bird in the Washington aviary: the heavyweight cultural donor and patron. Now seventy-nine, he has devoted much of his money and energies to developing the city's cultural scene. For fourteen years president and now chairman of the Corcoran Gallery, Kreeger has also long been active in supporting music, opera, and theater. But Kreeger's principal bequest to the local patrimony is this art-filled house, in Spring Valley, which by the provisions of his will is destined to be turned into a foundation and private museum.

The house has been ready for its change in status ever since it was on the drawing board: Johnson designed a long main picture gallery, which dominates the first floor and contains an assemblage of excellent late Picassos, an arresting early Picasso of a café-concert scene, and paintings by Sisley, van Gogh, Cézanne, Pissarro, and Degas. The Kreegers' nine Monets, mostly late, mauvish, vaporously moody works, decorate the dining room. The spoils of a quarter century of art-hunting trips to New York and Europe spill over along hallways and down stairways, where one can linger over a Miró, an Avery—as well as some *pompier* confections that seem out of place in the opulent austerity of Johnson's building.

On the lower level, you eye a den full of Stella, Still, Rosenquist, and other modern Americans and then pass through a small, vest-pocket gallery of African art before coming to the music room, one wall of which is casually festooned with a Chinese silk scroll, twenty-three feet long, of whimsical glyphs done by Miró. At the back of the house Johnson installed a small, all-marble sculpture court, which is dotted with a Maillol nude, a couple of Arps, and various large but unremarkable twentieth-century bronze sculptures.

Regular guests at the house might see these treasures while attending one of the live concerts that the Kreegers frequently organize—where the entertainment can range from the Tokyo Quartet to Kreeger himself, fiddling out Scott Joplin on his own Stradivarius. Failing that, requests to visit this treasure house, on the one and only spring day it opens its doors, according to Mr. Kreeger, can be made through your local museum—but be aware that tours are booked through 1991.

GREENVILLE, D.C.

Anyone approaching the outer limits of the District of Columbia is entering another type of district—that of great estates. One of the grandest is Hillwood, in northwest Washington. Long the home of the late Marjorie Merriweather Post, the cereal heiress, it remains a fabulous spot with magnificent grounds. Horticultural monuments dot the panoramic garden like so many beautiful but disparate curios in a collector's vitrine.

East of her Georgian-revival mansion (see *Connoisseur*, May 1984) Mrs. Post wanted a spot of tropical lushness and built a greenhouse resplendent with orchids. To the west, beyond the vast expanse of Lunar Lawn, she put in a miniature Japanese mountainscape. Adjoining the aptly named Rhododendron Walk is her pet cemetery, the final resting place of Scampi and her other beloved schnauzers.

Mrs. Post bought Hillwood in 1955 and occupied it until her death, in 1973, when the estate was entrusted to the Smithsonian. That institution soon discovered it could not afford the upkeep—a handful of gardeners could hardly do what Mrs. Post's two dozen–odd caretakers had done—and relinquished ownership to the Post family foundation in 1976. By then, the garden had suffered badly.

Today, with a team of fourteen gardeners at work, Hillwood is again a marvel, though not quite as extraordinary as it was in Mrs. Post's heyday. The old splendor still reigns in the eighteenth-century style parterre and the adjoining rose garden, where Mrs. Post's ashes are interred. The visitor cannot fail to [illegible] horticultural imperative [illegible] plant for beauty; plant, above all, for fun. The house is open by appointment (202-686-5807), but the garden is accessible.

Tip. If you cannot get into Hillwood, visit Tudor Place, at the corner of Q and Thirty-first streets, in Georgetown. It opens October 15, also by appointment only; call (202) 965-0400.

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After the meal, during which the hostess is constantly making the rounds of the tables, she gives a short welcoming speech replete with the names and titles of the honored guests. As good a measure as any of her success at nonpartisan networking is that her efforts have led to political rewards from opposite camps: in 1979 President Carter named Mrs. Cooperstmith representative to the United Nations; during the Reagan years she has (at the request of Maureen Reagan) several times been named a U.S. delegate to the U.N. committee on women's rights. Next on her agenda—given a Democratic administration—is an ambassadorial appointment. Meanwhile, she is just delighted to keep Washington hopping.

CONNOISSEUR OF CONNECTIONS

There has always been a reliable index to who's who in Washington: roughly speaking, it corresponds to the guest lists of the city's premier social hostesses. Perle Mesta and Gwen Cafritz, each in her time, helped to determine—and rank—the D.C. social-political scene. Today, one replacement is Pamela Harriman, a powerhouse Democratic fund-raiser whose dinners, consummately elegant and well attended as they are, invariably revolve around bigwig Dems. For a lively evening, with multipartisan banter and surprising networking, the place to be invited is Coopersmith's.

Esther Coopersmith has developed a reputation as Washington's master bridge builder, someone who relishes nothing more than creating amicable encounters between political adversaries and prospective allies, in the process extending her vast nexus of connections. Brought up in Wisconsin, she cut her political teeth managing the Kefauver Wisconsin presidential-primary campaign in 1952 and has since raised $17 million for the party and various charities (Senator Proxmire called her the "Democratic political den mother of all fund-raising").

Eight years of a Republican administration have not given this stalwart Democrat much pause. Outside of her fund-raisers, which she makes a point of not holding at her home, Mrs. Coopersmith has had over politicians as ideologically different as Ed Meese and Jimmy Carter, the ambassador to Israel, and the ambassador of Saudi Arabia.

Mrs. Coopersmith has made the throwing of a political dinner party into an art form. Warm, bubbly, and unflappably gracious, she has an infectious way of knitting together a gathering of sixty disparate and high-titled strangers. The setting surely helps: Mrs. Coopersmith and her husband, a wealthy real-estate lawyer, entertain at their southern-style pillared mansion in Potomac, Maryland. She stands at the door greeting guests until dinnertime, when the assembled dignitaries troop through the kitchen and help themselves to the self-service buffet. In a city awash in protocol, Mrs. Coopersmith is a staunch believer in the virtues of informality.

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WASHINGTON COURT ORDER

Where did the vice-president (solid sterling club-level game) and the secretary of the treasury (ditto) meet, some years ago, only to become friends and confidants? Answer: On a tennis court.

Indeed, the second-most-important court in Washington is the tennis court. As everyone who plays knows, social tennis here is just as much about political as about athletic power. So intense an activity (it is really not just a sport) facilitates those other consummate Washington pastimes—"accessing" and "networking"—and may even lead to close personal relationships.

The best place to play (or to be seen playing) is the White House court or the vice-president's two courts. (Dressing rooms were installed and fresh towels and Gatorade were instituted at the White House court during the Reagan era.) Senator Lloyd Bentsen, the Democratic vice-presidential candidate and one of the top players on Capitol Hill, can often be seen at seven A.M. at the St. Albans Tennis Club, another preferred venue on the D.C. tennis circuit. In the same league is the court at the Swedish embassy, in back of the Spanish-revival mansion on Nebraska Avenue. The ambassador, Count Wilhelm Wachtmeister (pictured at right), the former number-seven player in the over-sixty class in his native country, says that he considers it "in bad taste" to use up scarce court time to conduct business, but his regular adversaries include the secretary of state, the director of the CIA, a passel of senators—Heinz (Republican, Pennsylvania) and Johnston (Democrat, Louisiana) are the best—and the columnist Rowland Evans, Jr. Katharine Graham is an occasional doubles partner. Needless to say, Sweden's relations with the United States are in splendid shape, with a good possibility of getting better; on occasion the count produces Bjorn Borg to play with George Bush.

The ambassador has the reputation of being a solid, emotional, fiercely competitive player. He describes his strong points as "a rather aggressive serve and volley." He does not play with just anyone. In fact, even if your game is adequate, you have little chance of getting on the court with Count Wachtmeister. However, you may want to use the good offices of [illegible] Kemper, the head pro at the [illegible] Tennis Club and the [illegible] Washington tennis [illegible] problems. She likes to put together interesting match-ups—sometimes because she has been asked, sometimes relying simply on who she thinks would make the most powerful foursome. Meanwhile, behind the foliage on Nebraska Avenue some of Washington's most agile powers are at work, playing on the ambassador's court.

The trappings of Washington power have always tended toward the functional—limos and large corner offices rather than fine food and art. When the late Arthur Burns was chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, in the seventies, he complained about the bare walls in his office and in the two buildings that the Fed occupied. An amateur painter, Burns would invariably compare the Fed's quarters with the central-bank facilities in such countries as Spain, Belgium, and France, where fine paintings on the walls have always been part of the scene. He would anticipate the visits of European monetary officials with trepidation, like a country cousin awaiting the arrival of his cosmopolitan relations.

Burns's dream to see the Fed brightened with art is now a reality. In 1975, under his tenure, the nation's bank set up its Fine Arts Program; today, the two Fed buildings are dotted with a remarkable collection of art. It is eclectic, though emphasis is on nineteenth-century American painting and contemporary sculpture.

Fed cuisine, however, remains another matter. Alan Greenspan, the current chairman, lunches with heads of state and central-bank directors in an L-shaped private dining room graced with artworks by Daniel Huntington and Henry Bacon as well as a magnificent view onto the Potomac. Alas, the quality of the cooking does not match the eminence of the company. Guests are offered whatever is on the Fed's homespun cafeteria menu that day—chicken salad, for example. No alcohol is served; a symbolic note of moderation and sobriety is struck at every Fed meal.

Unless you are the finance minister of Spain or some such visitor, you will not get to sample Fed fare—no great loss. It is not so with Burns's legacy of art. The collection, one of the little-known jewels embedded in the federal bureaucracy, may be visited Thursday afternoons, or by appointment (contact the Fed's tour-program office, at 202-452-3149).

THE ULTIMATE OFFICIAL CEREMONY

The first time the former House Speaker Tip O'Neill was invited to the Evening Parade at the Washington Marine Barracks was also the first time he had heard of either. The "oldest post of the corps," located not far from downtown Washington, may be easy to overlook, but it is not easy to forget. Ask anyone who has visited the formal gardens of the Commandant's Residence, built in 1806, or attended the Evening Parade, held once a week in the spring, summer, and fall.

There are two ways to attend the marines ceremony. Most of the time it is open to the public (for information call 202-433-6060). The more exclusive way is to receive an invitation from the marine-corps commandant, who reserves several evenings a year for his own guests (though most seats in the stands remain at the public's disposal). In the latter case, the cere- [illegible] by a lavish garden party, [illegible] and by tradition, [illegible] VII.

After the reception, the commandant's guests, by now fortified with food and drink, are escorted by officers to their seats. Protocol requires that the commandant and his invitees be last to enter the parade ground and take their seats.

Precisely at nine o'clock P.M., the elaborate ritual begins on the oblong, grass-covered parade ground, crossed by three cement walks, in front of the commandant's Federal-style house. Flanking the grounds on each long side are the more modest officers' residences and the barracks buildings. Two companies of marines in full military dress, each 120 men strong, participate in the field exercises. Accompanying them are the 30-man Marine Band ("The President's Own"), the 80-man Marine Drum & Bugle Corps ("The Commandant's Own"), as well as Sergeant Chesty VII, a seventy-pound, magnificently wrinkled English bulldog. Chesty VII was recently brought back from retirement after the discharge of Chesty VIII, who had the impertinence to sit down during the course of the parade.

Inaugurating the ceremony, a lone marine, spotted in a beam of light, marches out onto the field to ring the bell salvaged from the World War II destroyer U.S.S. *Nicholas*. As each part of the exercises kicks off—the marching out of the mascot, the showing of the marine colors, the silent drill, and the three-man mirror drill inspection—it is picked out by a spotlight, leaving the previous phase in darkness. At the end, in a moment of eerie drama, the beam of light finds a lone marine high on the ramparts of the barracks, sounding the melancholy taps. Afterward, guests get to wander onto the field to meet thirty officers, who shake hands and exchange thanks and courtesies. For a citadel of officialdom, Washington is the site of very few things that can be properly called ceremonies. The Evening Parade is the one guaranteed to raise goose bumps. □

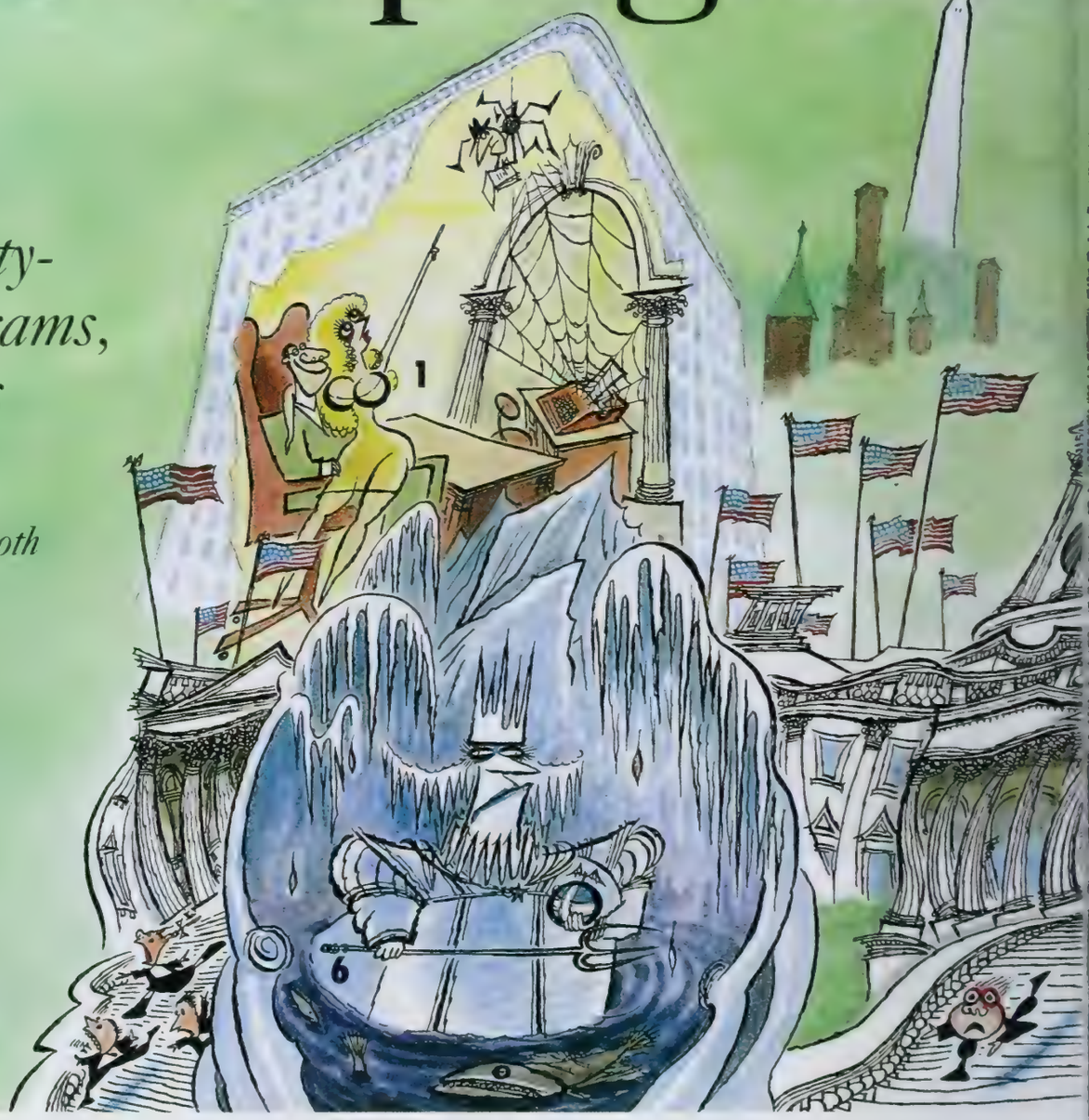
Ina Ginsburg is a long-time resident and admirer of Washington.

The Unexpurgated Tour

The sites of twenty-five scandals, scams, and peccadilloes

By Victor Gold

Illustrations by Arnold Roth



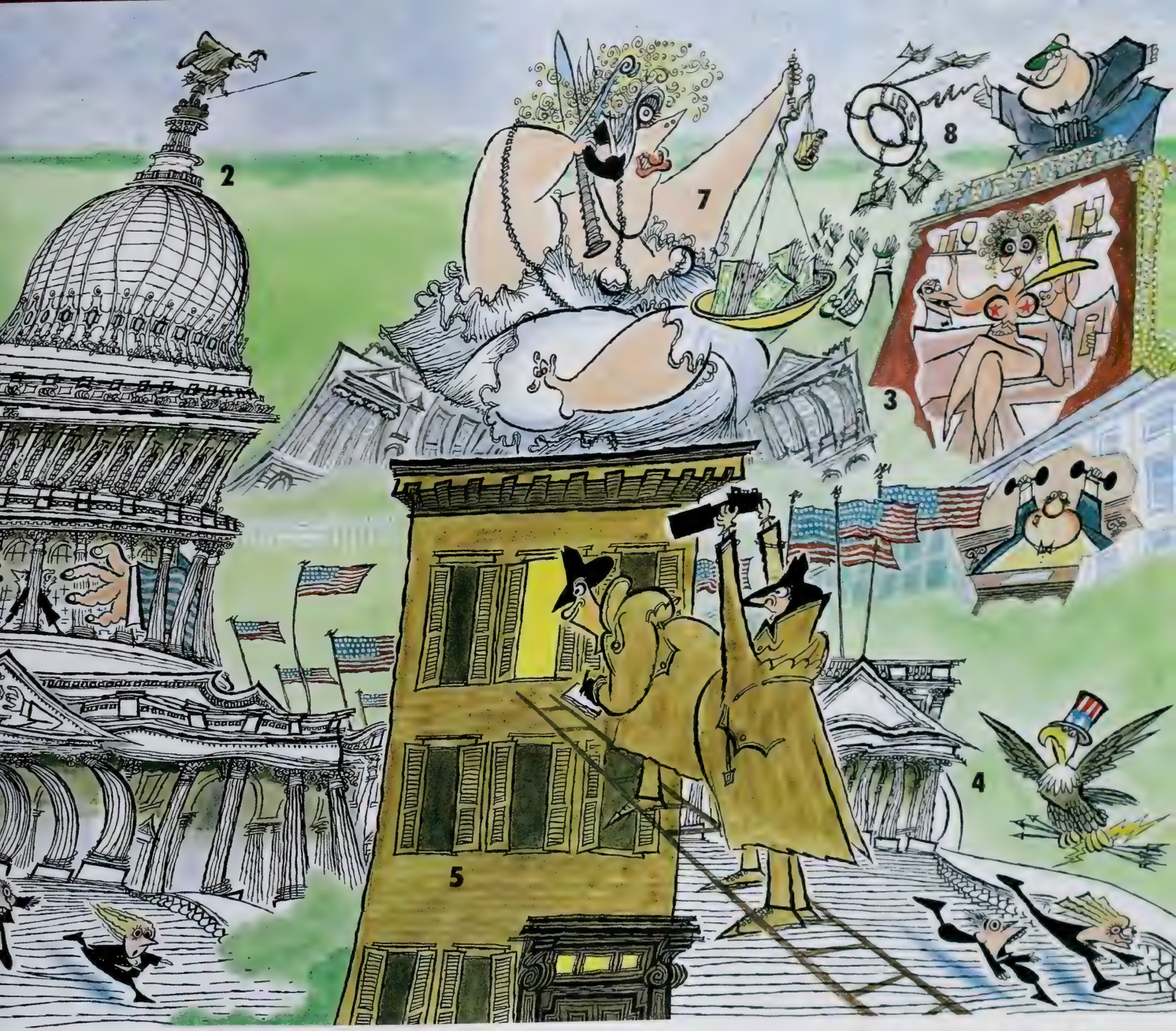
Welcome to Washington, D.C., seat of American government since 1800, site of an annual cherry-blossom festival. It is a tourist's delight: the city where more than nineteen million visitors nowadays make the local tour-guide franchise the largest sightseeing operation in America. That, of course, is the unauthorized, sanitized tour: eighteen stops for seven dollars, everything from A (the Air & Space Museum) to Z (the Zero Milestone).

But what about the national capital bypassed on your official tour—the city not [illegible] past, both distant and recent: a tabloid view of Washington, twenty-five stops, beginning on Capitol Hill with . . .

1. CONGRESSMAN WAYNE HAYS'S OLD OFFICE, SITE OF ELIZABETH RAY'S UNUSED TYPEWRITER. When it came to light that the powerful House committee chairman had a blond, well-proportioned typist on his payroll who could not type (irrelevant, really, because she rarely went to the office), the House more or less fell in on Hays's political career. He resigned his seat, while his nontyping after-hours companion, Elizabeth Ray, exposed here in a national-magazine spread and then went on to bigger and better things with a kiss-and-tell book and a meandering acting career (albeit minor) in New York. At last report, Hays himself was living the life of a country squire in Ohio, far removed from the trials and temptations of . . .

2. THE U.S. CAPITOL. This is the scene of too many scandals, scams, and flaps to be listed on any one map. Limiting ourselves to the 1980s, we find two gross encounters of the lurid kind. One involved liaisons between members of Congress and young Senate-House pages. Congressman Dan Crane of Illinois was censured by the House for having a fling with a young female page, and Gerry Studds of Massachusetts, for a relationship with a male House employee. Along more-traditional family lines, Rita Jenrette in 1980 disclosed that she had had sex with her husband, Congressman John Jenrette of South Carolina, in late-night sessions on the Capitol steps. We will meet Jenrette again (see tour site number 21); Rita, after divorce, wrote a kiss-and-tell book, *My Capitol Secrets*, and then launched a (minor) acting career.

3. THE CARROLL ARMS & QUORUM CLUB. Hidden away on the second floor of the old Carroll Arms Hotel, the Quorum was a plush private club, featuring waitresses in scanty, skin-tight uniforms who catered to an all-male membership of senators, congressmen, and heavy-hitting Washington business lobbyists. It was founded in 1961 by Bobby Baker, who made a multimillion-dollar fortune while working for Lyndon Johnson as secretary to the Senate majority. When investigated by the Senate Rules Committee for financial wheeler-dealing, Baker resigned his Senate job and later went to jail. In time, the wrecking ball



of progress hit the hotel, to make way for such fresh Capitol Hill architectural treats as . . .

4. THE NEW NEW SENATE OFFICE BUILDING. In the beginning, there was an old Senate Office Building (SOB); then came a new one. Even though the number of U.S. senators had not increased from 100, their need for lebensraum led to plans for still another building in 1972. Estimated cost: $47.9 million. While railing about extravagance and cost overruns in other federal areas, senators over the next years blithely approved increased funding for their new architectural toy, the final tab coming to an estimated $138 million, making it the nation's most expensive building in 1982. Not long after, a few blocks away, the Library of Congress was forced to shorten its hours of public use, because of limited funding.

5. GARY HART'S POLITICAL GRAVE SITE. When a Miami reporter took up Senator Hart's challenge "Follow me," he caught him at his town house holding a late-night job interview with the blond model Donna Rice, while his wife was *en vacances*. Hart abandoned his presidential race and later sold the house to one Ghebre Mehrefeab for an estimated $325,000. Ms. Rice's kiss and-tell book and success as an actress are still awaited.

6. THE ICE QUEEN'S PALACE. We have arrived at the Environmental Protection Agency headquarters. In the early years of the Reagan administration, Anne Burford, the agency's head, was suspected of manipulating Superfund money to affect the outcome of key political races. Burford earned her nickname—the "Ice Queen"—because of a frigid demeanor, but congressional heat on alleged EPA sweetheart deals with industrial polluters led to quick meltdown. Cited for contempt of Congress (the charges were dropped), Burford resigned in 1983 and then wrote a kick-and-tell book blaming Congress and the news media for her problems. The "Ice Queen" was not prosecuted for wrongdoing, but another EPA official, the assistant administrator for toxic wastes Rita Lavelle, was convicted of obstructing a congressional inquiry.

7. [illegible] The de[illegible] the [illegible] the [illegible] other federal agency. In the past half century alone, no fewer than three attorneys general (Harry Daugherty, John Mitchell, Richard Kleindienst), along with one assistant attorney general (T. Lamar Caudle), have been indicted for betraying the public trust, not to mention Justice involvement in such unsavory activities as the tapping of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s private phone calls. It was here at Justice during the Harding years that the Teapot Dome scandal was covered up and, five decades later, G. Gordon Liddy presented the attorney general with a plan to disrupt the 1972 Democratic convention in Miami by sending in hordes of prostitutes to lure unsuspecting McGovernite delegates.

8. THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE Who was T. Lamar Caudle? The as-

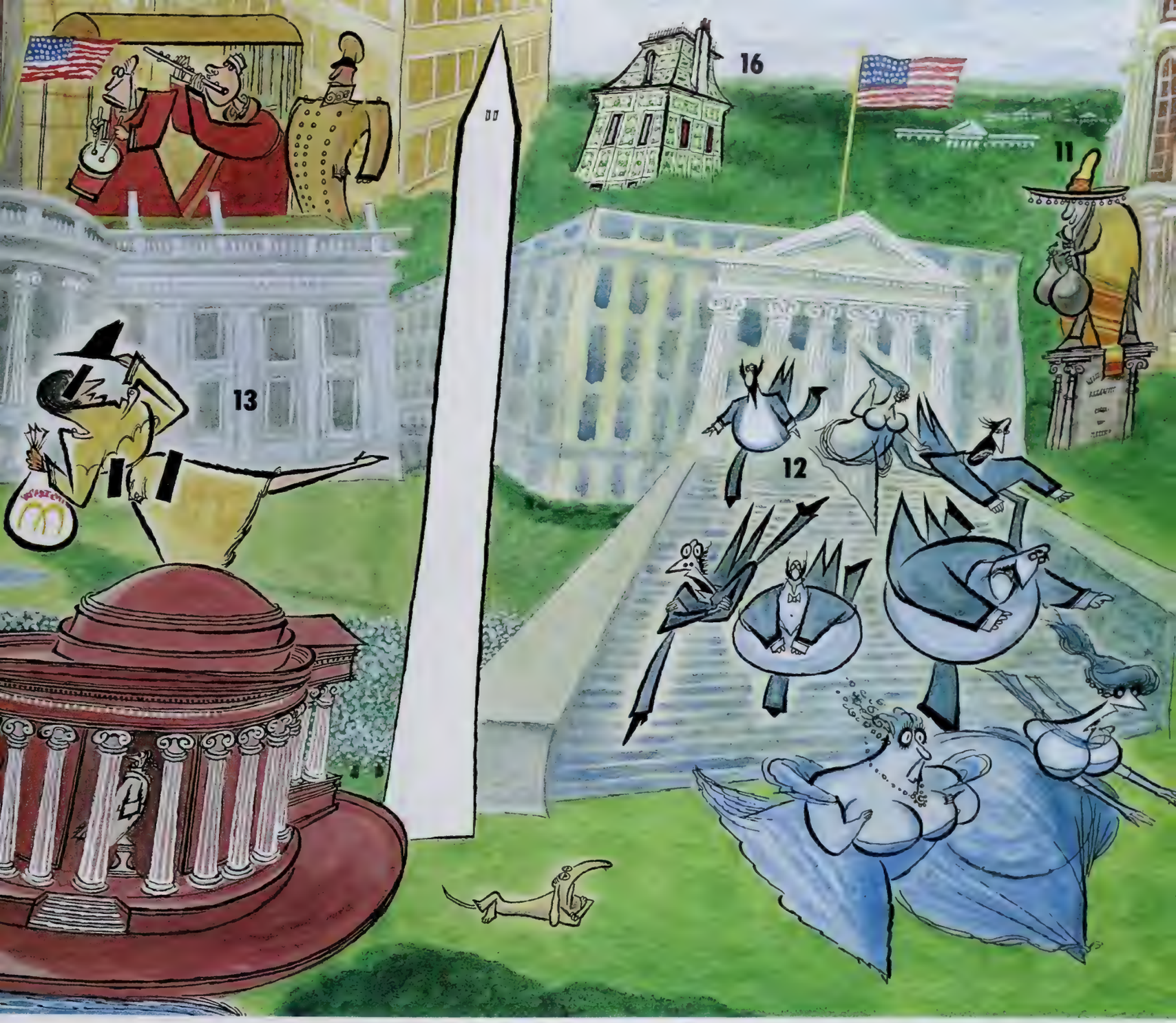
sistant attorney general in charge of the Justice Department's tax division during the Truman years. What crime was he charged with? Conspiracy to fix a prominent businessman's tax case. Caudle's co-conspirator? President Truman's appointments secretary, Matthew Connelly. Internal Revenue was a prime political target during the 1952 presidential campaign, since both the agency's commissioner and its assistant commissioner, top-of-the-line tax collectors, were convicted of tax fraud. In all, 177 Internal Revenue officials had to be fired—32 for "irregularities," 18 for embezzlement, 33 for "improper associations" (Donnell, despite President Truman's claim that his book-keeper signed all checks, was the first [illegible]

9. CONSTITUTION HALL. *The* place to perform, if you were a world-famous contralto, this was *not* the place for world-famous Marian Anderson. She was turned away in 1939 by the hall's owners, the Daughters of the American Revolution, because of a "white artists only" clause. Angered at the exclusion, Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes offered Miss Anderson use of the Lincoln Memorial for a public concert, which turned out to be one of her most memorable. Later, in the 1950s—given a DAR change of heart—Constitution Hall was the site of several Anderson performances. Still later, in the 1970s, a true revolution occurred when the hall was made available to rock groups.

10. THE TIDAL BASIN. The stand, re[illegible] powerful chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, Wilbur Mills, made a big splash here when his nighttime companion the "Argentinian Bombshell," Fanne Foxe, dove into the basin as police stopped their speeding car. The professional stripper did stints in Boston and Detroit, wrote her autobiography, and then moved to the Connecticut suburbs. As for Mills, he brooded awhile, then dried out (after joining Alcoholics Anonymous), and resigned his chairmanship. The former House chairman, once more a pillar of his community, now practices law in Washington.

11. "BOSS" SHEPHERD'S STATUE. In 1871, Alexander Robey Shepherd, a friend of President Ulysses S. Grant's, was put in charge of the District of Columbia Board of Public Works. He immediately launched a $6 million program to pave streets, dig sewers, and plant trees. Although investigators looked into taxpayers' charges of misconduct, Shepherd continued undeterred, running up a bill of $18 million. The city went bankrupt; a second investigation turned up evidence of corruption in the way Shepherd awarded construction contracts. The "Boss" left for Mexico. His enemies said good riddance, but in 1909, his supporters, having proclaimed him the "Maker of Washington," commissioned the statue in his honor.

12. THE TREASURY BUILDING, not City Hall, was the site of the Grant administration's worst scandals. Both the Crédit Mobilier and the Whiskey Ring scams involved revenue officials at the highest level. A harbinger of Grant's



problems at Treasury was the socially disastrous inaugural ball, held in the still-unfinished building on March 4, 1869. Guests gagged on air thick with dust; fine silk gowns were ruined. To compound the problem, confusion reigned in the coat-check room, which left cabinet members' and diplomats' wives exposed to the elements and sent the New York editor Horace Greeley home coatless, hatless, and more than ever convinced that Washington was a city where "the rents are high, the food is bad, the dust is disgusting, the mud is deep, and the morals are deplorable."

13. THE WHITE HOUSE COAT CLOSET. Specifically, the one that adjoined the president's office was the love nest regularly used by Harding and his mistress, Nan Britton, to elude the watchful eyes of the "Duchess" (Mrs. Harding). Britton was slipped into the executive mansion by the Secret Service during daylight hours, between official appointments. Six decades later, Judith Campbell Exner claimed to have shared intimacies and messages from the Mob with President John F. Kennedy, not in the coat closet but in a more comfortable master bedroom upstairs in the executive mansion.

14. THE ONE-TIME SITE OF CREEP OFFICES AND SHREDDER NUMBER ONE. It seems like only yesterday, but it was sixteen years ago, that Nixon's Committee for the Re-election of the President shredded documents at 1701 Pennsylvania Avenue as part of the Watergate cover-up. This machine is not to be confused with one directly across the street, at . . .

15. THE ONE-TIME SITE OF LT. COLONEL OLIVER NORTH'S OFFICE AND SHREDDER NUMBER TWO. Here, a decade and a half after official Washington purportedly learned "the lessons of Watergate," North and his loyal aide Fawn Hall spent a Friday evening in the fall of 1986 shredding documents as part of the Iran-contra cover-up. *Le plus ça change . . .*

16. THE LITTLE GREEN HOUSE AT 1625 K STREET NORTHWEST. Until Watergate, the best-known Washington scandal of the century went under the name Teapot Dome, so called because of the physical appearance of federal property in Wyoming improperly [illegible] officials. This was but [illegible] money-making scams [illegible] Harding's home-[illegible] "Ohio Gang." The Little Green House (long since replaced by an office building) served as headquarters for the gang, and word around town was that if you wanted a favor from the White House, 1625 K was the place to go.

17. THE SITE OF GOLDFINE'S MIDNIGHT MARCH. A Boston industrialist, Bernard Goldfine was fond of giving Oriental rugs and vicuña coats to his friends in high places. When the columnist Drew Pearson reported in 1958 that Sherman Adams, President Eisenhower's assistant, had received several expensive rugs and a coat after intervening with federal agencies on Goldfine's behalf, a congressional committee called Goldfine as a witness. The Boston businessman and his staff checked into the Sheraton Carlton Hotel, on Sixteenth and K. On

discovering that his suite was bugged by the men in the adjoining room—among them a congressional investigator and Pearson's young legman Jack Anderson—Goldfine and his entire entourage, some still in bathrobes, made a traffic-stopping march across K to register at the Hilton. By scandal's end, Adams had been forced to resign, Goldfine had gone to prison, and Anderson's reputation as a Washington muckraker had been assured.

18. HOWARD HUNT'S ROOM WITH A VIEW. Another lodging place, another late-night raid. The year was 1972. While James McCord and the men from CREEP were bugging Democratic party headquarters [illegible] Watergate, [illegible] son Lodge. The discovery of Hunt's White House phone number in the address book of one of the arrested burglars led Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein to link the Nixon campaign committee to the crime.

19. THE *WASHINGTON POST*. Winner of a Pulitzer for its Watergate exposé, the *Post* suffered its own scandal seven years later, when its reporter Janet Cooke had to return a Pulitzer for a feature story about a young drug addict that turned out to be fiction, not fact. Cooke resigned. The assistant managing editor of the *Post*'s Metro section at the time, Bob Woodward, was reassigned within a few months.

20. THE GEORGE TOWN CLUB. Beginning [illegible] Tongsun Park, a [illegible] and owner of the George Town Club, allegedly bribed congressmen and other officials to get low-interest U.S. loans on rice purchases with up to $1 million a year to the lawmakers as "gifts," in addition to offering them the services of his club, which often included female companionship. Key players in this scandal were Congressman Otto Passman of Louisiana and that state's governor, Edwin Edwards. When it was revealed that Park had given a $10,000 gift to Edwards's wife, the governor asked a reporter, "You don't want my wife to accept gifts—or my children? You want them to end up like *your* children?" In the end, only one person, Richard Hanna, was convicted in the Koreagate scandal.

21. THE ABSCAM TOWN HOUSE. Watergate had been an Executive Department scandal; Koreagate, then Abscam, were congressional scandals. Was this what the framers of the Constitution meant by separate but equal branches of government? Abscam involved the FBI's conducting a "sting" operation in 1980, offering members of Congress and other public officials money in return for special favors for a mythical Arab sheikh. The role of the sheikh, in full burnoose, was played by an FBI agent. A town house, built in Williamsburg colonial style and located at Foxhall Road and W Street Northwest, served as the sheikh's Washington headquarters. It was complete with authentic antiques, exquisite china, a lavish wine cellar, and hidden cameras. Lawmakers entered, met the sheikh, negotiated, took money, and became unwitting video stars. In the end, one senator and six con-

gressmen—including Rita Jenrette's husband, John—were tried and convicted of accepting bribes.

22. MIKE DEAVER'S RIVERFRONT OFFICE. In the mideighties, special prosecutors began investigating former Reagan White House officials for improperly using their influence on behalf of their clients. Chief among these ex-officials was Michael Deaver, confidant of President and Mrs. Reagan. On leaving the White House, Deaver opened a plush public-relations office, overlooking the Potomac. It has since closed down. Pending the outcome of Deaver's legal problems, no reopening date has been set.

23. KENNEDY CENTER, or KenCen, is the site of the biggest cultural flap in recent Washington history. Local theater supporters, chafing under longtime criticism of the national capital as a cultural desert, hoped for an American counterpart to Paris's Comédie Française. In 1984, Peter Sellars, the reputed wunderkind of modern theater, was hired as artistic director of the American National Theater on a wave of favorable press notices. His first production, a somewhat askew version of Shakespeare's *Henry IV*, Part 1, lost $700,000. He followed that with Chekhov's *A Seagull*, done as a laser-light show with a pianist playing Scriabin. Then came a rendition of Sophocles' *Ajax*, rewritten to place Ajax, now a deaf Vietnam veteran, on the steps of the Pentagon. So much for Washington's Comédie Française, or, at least, Peter Sellars's artistic direction. With ANT founde ing in red ink, Sellars went on permanent "sabbatical" in August 1986.

24. THE PENTAGON. No Washington-scandal tour would be complete without a visit to this five-sided, money-crunching monster across the Potomac. First, there were $435 hammers; then, imperial toilets that sell for either $600 or $1,000—who counts? Now, in the last of the Reagan years, there is "Pentagate"—the biggest military procurement scandal of them all. The still-unfolding tale of bribery may ultimately involve billions of dollars' worth of top-secret government contracts and at least a dozen aerospace [illegible]

[illegible] Finally, this is [illegible] after the capital's first [illegible] Pierre Charles L'Enfant, [illegible] who, in the 1790s, tried to forestall greedy land speculators by refusing to make multiple copies of street plans for the city of Washington. Considered obdurate, L'Enfant was fired by President Washington. A more pliant city planner named Blodgett was, however, able to persuade Secretary of State Jefferson of the wisdom of a lottery scheme whereby the new city's streets could be built quickly. Blodgett was named superintendent of buildings and prepared his lottery. It failed. Deciding that "speculation [had] been his primary object from the beginning," President Washington relieved Blodgett of his duties. The city of Washington was scandalized. It would not be the last time. ■

Victor Gold is coauthor of The Body Politic, *a Washington novel-satire due out this fall.*

Places Washingtonians would like to keep secret

By Mark Ginsburg

"Southern efficiency and northern hospitality" has long been one of Washington's lesser-known traits. If you do not enjoy endless waiting in line at the drugstore to buy a roll of film, confusion and aggression in traffic, and rattletrap taxis with fares determined by a mysterious zone map instead of by meter, try any of the following luxury hotels. They are the most adept at smoothing the rough edges. But in a city that eschews extravagance in favor of functionality, their environments bespeak Cadillac, not Rolls-Royce. Do not look for linen sheets, gold bath taps, or starched uniforms. On the other hand, younger staff members are often pilgrims from the world's fallen aristocracies, making their way through local foreign-service schools. Multilingual conversation can easily culminate in an invitation to "my grandmother's castle in northern Italy" or to an estate in Morocco. This Chekhovian aspect adds poignancy to the kingdom of bureaucracy.

Top hotels with personality, listed in order of preference, are the following:

The Four Seasons: The luxury hotel with the highest occupancy rate in the District is located in an area for walking, window-shopping, and dining. Georgetown was built for people and horses, not cars, yet is still convenient to the entire city. At capacity, the hotel remains cool, crisp, and inviting, with acres of blond wood paneling, potted plants, and quietly imaginative rooms. The Canadian Four Seasons group is New Age chic, and it employs real people who do not tell you to "have a nice day." The resident coiffeur, George, sets the heads of top Washington wives. Reservations: (800) 332-3442.

The Ritz-Carlton: D. C.'s answer to the Beverly Hills Hotel, having weathered a notorious decline in management, has recently been taken over by the trademark's owners, apparently without losing clients. Most famous for its restaurant, the Jockey Club, the Ritz attracts celebrities from Nancy Reagan to Art Buchwald to Bill Cosby. Outfitted in full, Ralph Lauren-esque regalia, with flourishes of chintz and Laura Ashley (wallpaper), the Ritz-Carlton is comfy, lived-in Wasp rather than suffocating, overstuffed Wasp. Its character lies in its having captured the flavor of old Washington and the nearby hunt country. The neighborhood is packed with embassies, and the hip Dupont Circle area (metro station, bookstores, restaurants) is within walking distance. Reservations: (800) 424-8008.

The Madison: Washington's oldest luxury hotel, now twenty-five, matches the repetitive, modern downtown office buildings surrounding it, a block away from the capital's Reeperbahn. A 1960s, ultraconservative, antique-filled, "presidential" decor, combined with a thoroughly professional staff and an extremely well connected owner (Marshall B. Coyne), ensures the loyalty of grade-A VIPs. It is the only D.C. hotel I stayed in that offered both a bidet and a minifridge in the bathroom, for ladies' creams. No one ever questions the

Located at the entrance to historic Georgetown, the Four Seasons is our top choice for luxury hotels in the nation's capital. It sets the standards for service, cuisine, and amenities.

Madison (but leave ample time for car retrieval from valet parking). Reservations: (800) 424-8577.

The Willard Inter-Continental, downtown, feels like two hotels. The lobby, suites, function rooms, and dining rooms, all lovingly renovated, evoke the spirit of the turn-of-the-century Willard Hotel. The guest rooms are *haut bourgeois* Inter-Con: they have two color schemes (versus the smaller Four Seasons' five), pay-TV movies, and framed plastic Inter-Continental placards in one of the long hallways. Credit must be given to the engineering staff for softening Washington's hard, heavily chlorinated water. Splurge on one of the oval suites, or consider the Willard a living museum; the best parts of it are free. Reservations: (800) 327-0200.

The new **Park Hyatt** has excellent service, and, like the **Westin,** across the street, and the **Watergate Hotel,** it sports a fully equipped health club. The venerable **Sheraton Carlton,** with a $16 million renovation, and the **Hay-Adams** are somewhat less corporate and are located near downtown business centers. As luxury Washington is overbuilt, the hotels mentioned have generous weekend rates.

DINING (AND EAVESDROPPING)

Though Washington's restaurants suffer from Manhattan-size hype, they should not be judged by New York standards. The respected Zagat guide gives high marks to Jean-Louis, Le Lion D'Or, and Morton's of Chicago. Washingtonians swear by Le Pavillon, Twenty-One Federal, and Duke Zeibert's. But be warned: the phrase "deep throat" applied to news leakage, not to fine dining. With the exception of two hotel restaurants, most of the capital's fashionable ones are housed in characterless office buildings strategically located in proximity to the power center. You will learn nothing about the city by going to them. Explore instead the ethnic restaurants in Georgetown, Adams Morgan, and Old Town Alexandria, all real neighborhoods. The following selections combine architectural, culinary, and social cachet, albeit in varying proportions.

The Jockey Club, in the Ritz-Carlton, is like a branch of New York's Mortimer's: one goes because of who goes, a little bit hungry to be seen. Famous persons eat lunch and dinner there regularly, but their faces may not always be familiar to outsiders, especially since the *Washington Post* has curtailed its social coverage. Martin Garbisu, the dapper maître d', knows his protocol—that is one reason they all keep coming back.

Washingtonians swear by the Jockey Club—known for its crab cakes and celebrity watching.

The Willard Room, at the Willard Inter-Continental, provides a wonderful environmental experience, circa 1901. Fine crystal and china are put forward by eager waiters who spread oversize cloth napkins on the laps of well-groomed families. The wording of the Pop American menu includes "pine nuts," "panache," "pink champagne," "peppered," "smoked glaze," "coulis," "frozen Cointreau," and "young crisp"—perhaps to embellish what would otherwise have been traditional hotel fare. The Occidental Grill, adjacent to the Willard, is less expensive and has great, old-time atmosphere.

For **The Metropolitan Club,** it is worth tracking down a member (male or female, as of late) to see where top government people, highly paid lobbyists and lawyers, the press, and old Washington's cave dwellers dine. Slowly shedding their southern, shabby-genteel look, the exclusive, though no longer restricted, facilities are being thoughtfully renovated. No business is conducted in the main dining room—papers on the tables are not allowed. The generic club food is satisfying, with portions triple the size of Le Pavillon's. The Members' Grill, downstairs, has long wooden tables and a light buffet; old geezers grab a cookie from a jar on the way in.

Nora, on R Street, is a dinner [illegible] decorated with simple [illegible] has supremely good food. "Biodynamic" raw materials, raised or grown without chemical additives, help reeducate corrupted palates as to what a freshwater fish or a spinach leaf once tasted like, without heavy spices or complicated sauces as cover-ups. Even desserts are prepared with intelligence, care, and imagination. No credit cards; reservations a must: (202) 462-5143.

The Red Sea, on Eighteenth Street, is crowded, fun, spicy, and set in a very accessible neighborhood (Adams Morgan), filled with diverse ethnic groups and representative cuisines. Waitpersons from Addis Ababa with striking features and graceful bearing serve exotic, Ethiopian food that is meant to be scooped up with *injera* (a steaming textured pancake) and washed down with *tej* (honey wine). Reservations: (202) 483-5000.

Bamiyan Restaurant will take you to historic, reconstructed Old Town Alexandria, on the banks of the Potomac, en route to Mount Vernon, and to the Afghanistan of the former ruling class. First-rate meat kebabs, mild vegetable and rice dishes, and a casually elegant frontier backdrop lure upscale residents and CIA and foreign-service people. It is fifteen minutes from downtown D.C. Prices are reasonable; the staff is efficient and charming. Reservations: (703) 548-9006. □

Mark Ginsburg is a contributing editor of Vanity Fair.

Eleven

Washington's best works of art

By Thomas Hoving

The most consummate collectors in ancient Japan, the story goes, spent most of their lives collecting hundreds, even thousands, of treasures and then in their contemplative years got rid of all except a magnificent ten. Not such an easy thing to do—dispensing with old friends, fond visual memories; turning one's back on anything not absolute perfection. But very rewarding! I cannot think of any exercise that makes one a better connoisseur than winnowing down, say, three thousand or so works to the best ten.

I attempted this recently in Washington, taking on the contents of thirteen museums, missing only Dumbarton Oaks, which, unfortunately, was closed for a massive redo. My general conclusion is that Washington has come a long way as an arts center. Indeed, it is magnificent, far stronger than I had remembered. (This is a compliment. During my days in the museum business, I gnashed my teeth a number of times when the National Gallery of Art "stole" a fine picture from my grasp.) Yet for all the scope and range—from the ritual bronzes of the Sackler Gallery to the Chinese hanging scrolls of the Freer Gallery of Art to the late paintings by Georges Braque in the Phillips Collection—Washington's treasury of art is very much a compendium of private collections. Nobody has ever tried to build up the collections in an encyclopedic manner, complete from A to Z. One has the impression that everything has been collected from sheer love rather than as needed specimens of the High Baroque or the Second Empire or the Renaissance. Because of this intensely personal flavor, many of the collections have an appealing sense of informality about them.

The pervasive sense of the "amateur"

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, WASHINGTON, CHESTER DALE COLLECTION

Family of Saltimbanques, by Pablo Picasso (1905).

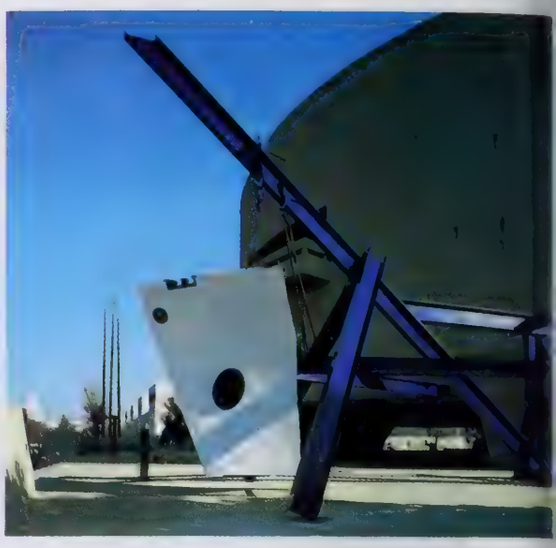
collector has also led to two serious failings. One is the gaps in the collections, gaps that a professional collector would not abide. There is, for example, precious little antique or medieval art around (with the exception of the Byzantine material at Dumbarton Oaks) and little furniture or decorative arts. The second failing stems from Washington's dependence on truly discerning collectors. Of the works on my short list, only one came into the museums of the city in the past decade. This more than suggests that since the glory days of Andrew W. Mellon, Joseph Widener, Chester Dale, Ailsa Mellon Bruce, Paul Mellon, and Joseph Hirshhorn there has been a serious slackening of the collecting spirit. The sad [illegible] art institutions in Washington have been tired of late when it comes to great acquisitions. One hopes this lassitude is only temporary and that the city's marvelous museums and art institutions will once again be on the prowl for treasures.

How does one pick the supreme masterworks? My criteria were that the work had to be:

■ by an acknowledged master at the peak of his or her creative powers,
■ the best possible example in its area, the summation of its epoch and artist,
■ one that has exerted strong influences throughout time,
■ one that is fully documented and in perfect condition,
■ something, above all, that grows on the consciousness continually and has timeless visual impact, a compelling sense of mystery or universal beauty.

I confess that I did not have the heart to pare the list down to ten, feeling that I could not do without eleven.* By way of compensation, I have ranked my choices in order of excellence. I have little doubt that, were others to visit the same institutions in Washington, D.C., to select the top eleven masterpieces, their picks would not vary substantially from mine. Anyone following my route should hurry to the Freer Gallery, which is scheduled to close for renovations on September 6. It will reopen in 1991.

1 The picture is tiny, it is religious, and it is hung with an almost cavalier lack of any appropriate sense of display or information. It is Jan van Eyck's splendid *Annunciation*, which may well be the most illustrious masterpiece in the nation. So full of jewels is it that you would think it was by Cartier. This is a painting that was not created to be seen from afar. The *Annunciation* is a late-medieval miniature that is meant to be observed very close to, and inch by inch, in the way a twelfth-century monk might have urged the devout to look at the sculptures on column capitals as if total assimilation of every particle would bring them closer to God.



HIRSHHORN MUSEUM AND SCULPTURE GARDEN, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Isis, by Mark Di Suvero (1978).

The striking feature of the painting, made between 1434 and 1436, is how the details work so successfully with the stunning perspective of the cathedral and the vigorous, almost exaggerated, human drama. The Angel, garbed in a mantle of silk and gold brocade, covered with dozen upon dozen white, pink, and russet pearls, sapphires, rubies, and garnets, seems awkward in face of the obviously confused Virgin. The Angel's grin is just a bit forced. Mary draws back, her eyes rolling up in consternation, and reluctantly replies to the messenger—by means of painted Latin words—"Behold the handmaid of the Lord." The hands of the two are as expressive as their faces: the Angel's are calm, while those of the Virgin Mary are rigid with anxiety.

In this *Annunciation*, God, truly, inhabits the details. Feast your eyes on the tight coils of the stone carving on the row of Romanesque capitals, symbols of the Old Law. Gaze at the miraculous translucency of the glass roundels in the windows behind the Virgin; lights seem to be shining through the wood panel. Don't miss the beautiful crystal scepter the Angel holds. But it is to the brocaded mantle of the

N.G.A., Gift of Mr. Washington Andrew W. Mellon Collection

The Dragon, by Raphael (ca. 1506).

*To be frank, I really loved twenty-four works. Here are the ones that did not make the cut:
12. The Adoration of the Shepherds *(ca. 1505–10), by Giorgione; 13.* The Bullfight *(ca. 1827), attributed to Goya; 14.* Both Members of This Club *(ca. 1909), by George Bellows; 15.* Aurora Borealis *(1865), by Frederic Edwin Church; 16.* Agostina *(1866), by Corot; 17.* The Mill *(ca. 1650), by Rembrandt; 18.* Stem Cup with Tou-ts'ai Enamel Decoration *(1465–87); 19.* Madonna and Child *(ca. 1505), by Albrecht Durer; 20.* Cavernous Earth with 27 Folds of Opaqueness *(1961–64), by Richard Pousette-Dart; 21.* The Old Musician *(1862), by Édouard Manet; 22.* Saint Helen *(ca. 1495), by Cima da Conegliano; 23.* A French Interior *(ca. 1645), by Louis Le Nain; 24.* Triptych *(1967), by Francis Bacon.*

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, WASHINGTON, SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION

Laocoön, by El Greco (ca. 1610).

Angel that one's disbelieving eyes return again and again. Only Jan van Eyck working at the top of his power could have accomplished such a feat.

2 Four hundred and seventy years later, Pablo Picasso painted *Family of Saltimbanques*. It is difficult to point to another work of the twentieth century that so powerfully sums up the human condition—mankind wandering in confusion and wonder, curiously at odds with nature, isolated in a mysterious wasteland, waiting for a message that will probably never arrive. The characters are dressed in performers' costumes, but the mood could not be more somber. The family is large and, one feels, has been wounded by unknown tragedy. The colors, pastel and light, serve only to cast a shade over the scene. Although the figures are set in a formal composition, like a series of Greek sculptures—no doubt Picasso was influenced by the tympana of the Parthenon—they are anything but classic in spirit; the universal truth they evoke is one of vulnerability.

3 Among all his awesome benefactions, Andrew Mellon was proudest of the *Alba Madonna*, by Raffaello Sanzio. My third choice is by Raphael and from Mellon—but it is not the famous *Madonna*. It is the diminutive *Saint George and the Dragon*, of around 1506. I judge it not only better than the *Madonna* but also the equal of any Raphael that has survived, even the *Entombment* in the Borghese, in Rome. Tiny, in mint condition, *Saint George* has everything: a sense of action, bravado, theatrics, and an almost overpowering fluidity and grace. For the fun of it, try to find the signature [illegible] for that strange to[illegible] [illegible] the gorgeous landscape [illegible] Torre delle Milizie [illegible] the center of Rome [illegible] this picture because it symbolizes a post he was highly effective in—that of superintendent of antiquities.

4 The only sculpture on my list of grand masterworks—another indication of the gaps in Washington's collections—is huge, rough, witty, energetic, impolite, incongruous, and made out of "scrap" materials. Mark Di Suvero's *Isis*, of 1978, squats menacingly, almost like a beast in too small a cage, and stares at the passing tourists through eyes made of hawser ports. The creature's pursed mouth is the hole for the anchor chain. For the head of *Isis*, Di Suvero wittily chose the steel prow of a refrigerator ship welded to a series of immense I beams painted blue. The tail of the sixty-five-foot-long, phantasmagorical beast is a black steel submarine buoy. Is *Isis* "Egyptian"? Not really, although its bulk and power do evoke something as bizarre as the Sphinx. The

sculpture is both an indomitable physical presence and the purveyor of a mood, a curiously effective, romantic mood.

5 A feeling of nightmare and incipient madness, tempered by a bewildering romanticism, imbues the stunning and weird depiction of the myth of Laocoön and his sons. El Greco's disturbing masterpiece of about 1610, limned in macabre colors—dead whites, lambent greens, and blue-blacks—is intended to be, I think, a glimpse of hell. Yet the magic of the scene of horror is that, above the writhing bodies (none of which displays any actual wounds), the picturesque town of Toledo looms like the City of God. The painting is at once ancient, Christian, and Freudian. One cannot force one's eyes away from its bravura surfaces and scintillating passages of paint. Once observed, the struggles of the doomed family are burned into one's mind.

6 Only six pairs of screens by the Edo-period master Sotatsu, active in the early seventeenth century, have survived, and this pair may well be the best. The storm clouds, the frothing waves, and the two dragons have been created in broad, diffuse tones of darks and lights. The vitality is such that one can almost feel the crack of lightning and hear the booming of thunder. The dragons are the storm: their claws and whiskers make up the lightning, and their undulating bodies become the scudding clouds of the squalls. The Japanese screens are powerful, intellectual, and infinite.

7 For most of his life, Pierre-Auguste Renoir was, it seems to me, an artist who squandered his talents, cranking out paintings according to an increasingly lackluster formula. But when he achieved high points, no one could match him, and not simply in the Impressionist movement, either. In a few rare works, Renoir becomes one of art history's epic geniuses. For sheer exuberance and joy, for unmatched skill in the act of painting, perhaps no other work transcends his *Luncheon of the Boating Party* (of 1881). It depicts a group of young artists, models, and actresses having fun. To describe the total experience of the painting, one has to admit to the grandeur of elements not usually thought to be grand—its intensely happy mood, overwhelming loveliness, perfect atmosphere, sugary-pretty people, and one of the cuddliest dogs since Fragonard's. In the hectic late twentieth century we love the work and, in a sense, grind our teeth in envy at it, so much do we long to be like these Belle Époque bohemians. *Luncheon* is so incandescently good that, as pure abstract art, observed apart from its subject, it is easily the equal of a Rubens. If you do not believe me, just restrict your glance to the white parts alone. A genuine triumph!

8 The temperature of a beautiful summer's day, the sound of distant voices, the rustle of the wind in the trees, the swish of fishnets in the water—this painting captures all you could ask for in a landscape. Curiously, most people hardly notice it. I stood nearby for an hour, counted over fifty gallery-goers, and saw but a dozen pause and take it in. The ones who did pause were transfixed by it.

Luncheon of the Boating Party by Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1881)

COURTESY OF THE FREER GALLERY OF ART, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, WASHINGTON, D.C.

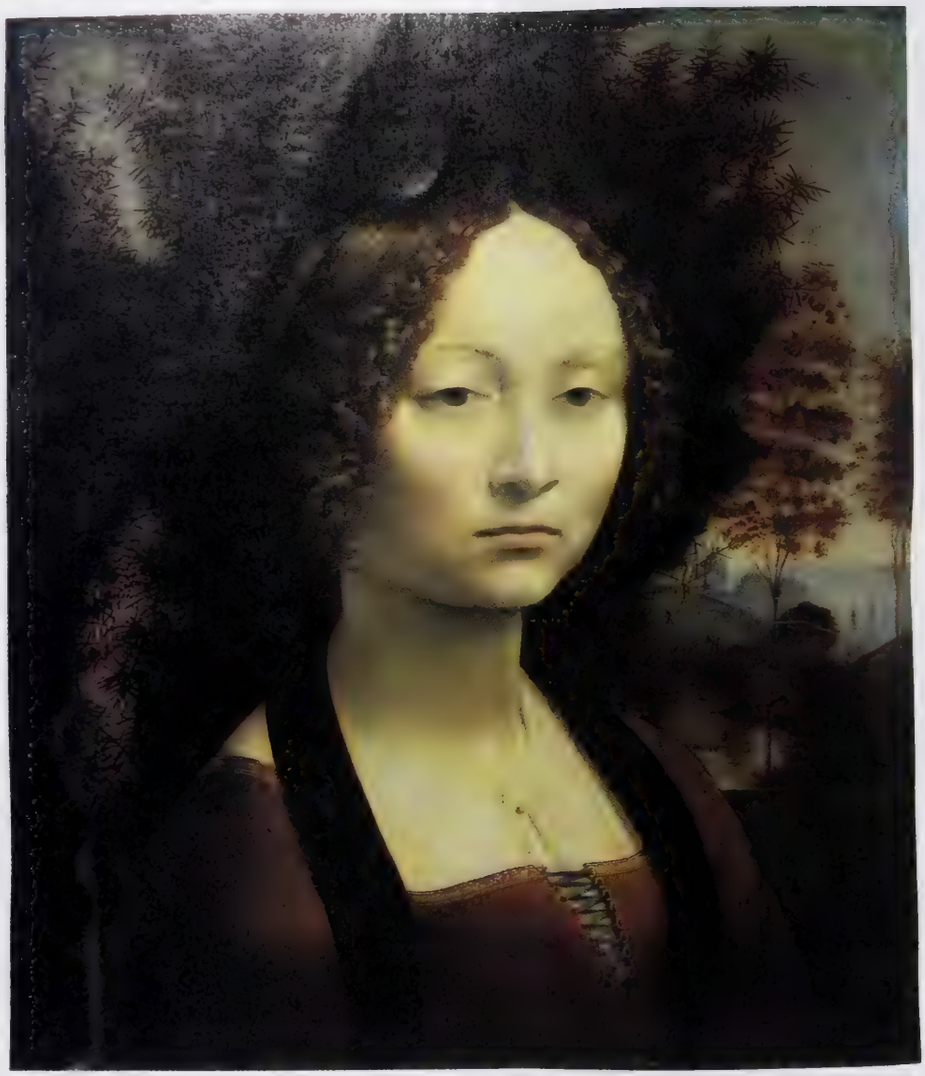
The work, entitled *Wivenhoe Park, Essex,* was painted by John Constable in 1816 and is arguably the finest by his hand in this country. Given to the museum by Joseph Widener back in 1942, it is in its condition as flawless as in its conception. This scene is not, one believes, what lay before the artist's eyes one late morning in midsummer. More likely, Constable spent a long weekend at the lovely house and later, back in the studio, bundled together some of the sweeter things that happened—a series of reflections from the cumulus clouds on the lake's shimmering surface, the cattle nearby, the swans posing just so, the fishermen setting the nets, the donkey cart, and the happy couple on board. The resulting landscape benefits from not being a plein air painting. It offers a greater degree of universality.

9 To think that the price of number nine—$5.6 million in 1967—was called "offensive, almost obscene" by one art reviewer seems faintly amusing

Dragons and Clouds, by Rimpa Sotatsu (Momoyama–Edo period).

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, WASHINGTON, WIDENER COLLECTION

Wivenhoe Park, Essex, by [illegible]



NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, WASHINGTON, AILSA MELLON BRUCE FUND

Ginevra de' Benci, by Leonardo da Vinci (1474).

now, especially since the work in question is a breathtaking painting by Leonardo da Vinci, the nation's only sure original by the artist. One has to chuckle, imagining what this haunting treasure might fetch on today's overheated art market. It is the renowned early (around 1474) portrait of Ginevra de' Benci, a gift of Ailsa Mellon Bruce. Its abundance of late-medieval symbolism (the juniper bush surrounding the lady's head like a halo; the Latin inscription on the stunning back panel, "Beauty adorns Virtue"; and the very form of the landscape itself) lends a satisfying aura of otherworldliness to the work. One suspects that, on a more mundane level, the artist was infatuated with, even obsessed by, the young woman, who had been, it appears, psychically wounded in an arranged marriage. Ginevra is nothing less than a secular nun, a humanist ascetic, with a steely ego stronger than any religious belief. She is an icon, and an arrogant one, looking partly at the viewer but mostly right through to some private image way out there somewhere.

10 Thomas Eakins's *The Pathetic Song* was painted in 1881, the same year as Renoir's *Luncheon*. It possesses the clarity of a Vermeer and the profundity of a Rembrandt. Few passages of paint are as confident and gripping as the silver-gray dress worn by the singer. How pleasing it is to see an Eakins that is not dark, gluey brown, loaded with too thick a mat of pigment. How nice it is to see a work that the master did not work over (and over). Here, all is translucent, particularly the "moment." As I see it, the singer has just come to the end of her sweet, sad song, the final breath an instant before an awed silence.

11 Rounding out the list are two portraits by Jan Vermeer, *The Girl in a Red Hat* and *Young Girl with a Flute*. They date from around 1665 and are minuscule, measuring barely nine inches by eight inches. How such dazzling re-cre-

THE CORCORAN GALLERY OF ART, MUSEUM PURCHASE, GALLERY FUND

The Pathetic Song, by Thomas Eakins (1881).

WHERE THEY ARE

1. van Eyck—National Gallery, Gallery 39
2. Picasso—National Gallery, East Building, upper level, Gallery 91
3. Raphael—National Gallery, Gallery 8
4. Di Suvero—Hirshhorn, Hirshhorn Sculpture Plaza, facing the Mall
5. El Greco—National Gallery, Gallery 34
6. [illegible] Gallery, Gallery 5
7. [illegible] Collection, Renoir Gallery
8. [illegible] Gallery 61
9. [illegible]
10. [illegible]
11. [illegible]
12. [illegible] Gallery 31
13. Goya—National Gallery, Gallery 37
14. Bellows—National Gallery, Gallery 71
15. Church—National Museum of American Art, Gallery 2F
16. Corot—National Gallery, Gallery 93
17. Rembrandt—National Gallery, Gallery 48
18. Stem Cup—Freer Gallery, Chinese Gallery
19. Dürer—National Gallery, Gallery 35
20. Pousette-Dart—Hirshhorn Museum, second floor, outer ring
21. Manet—National Gallery, Gallery 89
22. Cima—National Gallery, Gallery 21
23. Le Nain—National Gallery, Gallery 53
24. Bacon—Hirshhorn Museum, third floor, off Lerner Balcony Room

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, WASHINGTON, WIDENER COLLECTION

Young Girl with a Flute, by Jan Vermeer (ca. 1665).

ations of life could have been stuffed into such a small space is mind-boggling. These show Vermeer at the peak of his talents. They are glowing, lucid—and painted, one feels, with pigments extracted from liquefied pearls. Their vitality is unsurpassed in any other European painting of the seventeenth century. As with van Eyck's *Annunciation,* one is drawn to the perfection of painterly details—such things as the moistness of the open mouth of the beautiful girl in her [illegible] the polished lion's head [illegible] slightly out-of-focus [illegible] estries in the background of both pictures, and the irregular stripes on the strange and amusing hat of the girl with the flute. *Red* was donated in 1937 by Andrew Mellon; the flutist was presented to the lucky nation in 1943 by Joseph Widener. Bless them both.

Power Books

"If you want a friend in this town, buy a dog"

CULVER PICTURES (B)

By Jerrold Schecter

Books by insiders about Washington once were discreet, scholarly, and somber. Now comes a new genre: the Washington best-seller, an exotic combination of intimate gossip, trade secrets, self-justification, and revelations about the immorality of power. Serve-and-tell tales have created a booming market for Washington nonfiction—this summer there were at least five Washington books on the best-seller list—leaving New York and Hollywood behind as sources for insider gossip. Stigma and stain have bested discretion and dignity. The result has been to raise the level of public knowledge, lower the level of trust, and increase the hunger for new sensation.

Only yesterday, it seems, George Marshall and Dean Rusk refused to write their memoirs because they felt the relationship between the president and his secretary of state should be sacrosanct. Dean Acheson, the secretary of state from January 1949 to January 1953, waited sixteen years to write his memoirs (***Present at the Creation***), in 1969, for what was then considered a staggering advance—$200,000. When she was first lady, Jacqueline Kennedy tried to institute a signed, no-memoirs pledge from White House staffers, but she was dissuaded from pressing the idea. Now her nightmare of insider revelations has become an established genre, and she is part of the establishment, an editor at Doubleday.

Watergate was what whetted the public appetite for the new genre. Bob Woodward [illegible] were not insiders, [illegible] great [illegible] said [illegible] ill [illegible]

praying with Henry Kissinger the night he decided to resign—only the propriety.

In the Reagan administration, the budget director David Stockman was the first to declare an open season on loyalty when he revealed the bankruptcy of supply-side economics in ***The Triumph of Politics*** (Harper & Row). His advance of $2.3 million, including a $250,000 trust fund for his six-month-old daughter, set a precedent for Washington books.

Today it is a seller's market for senior government officials hawking personal intimacies about the president and first lady to the highest bidder. Hot, instant history commands advances of $1 million or more for cabinet officers—the more indiscretions, the higher the advance. (The former defense secretary Caspar Weinberger apparently offered few; the word is that he accepted a $500,000 advance from Warner Books.) Down a rung, the advance drops. For his forthcoming ***Command of the Seas***, John Lehman, secretary of the navy, got around $200,000.

Steno pads have now superseded long knives as weapons of choice. Serve and betray has replaced kiss and tell. "Loyalty" is not a word used often in Washington these days. Rather, people quote Harry Truman's apocryphal "If you want a friend in this town, buy a dog."

Stockman's impunity (some say Reagan invited the ensuing disloyalty by not firing Stockman sooner) and his big advance stirred the juices of greed and revenge. Michael Deaver's ***Behind the Scenes***, a defensive pastiche of anecdotes with little focus and a lot of mistakes, reportedly commanded a whopping $500,000 advance. The new books exploit the discrepancy between image and substance—a hallmark of the Reagan presidency. As a result, Washington books are obsessed with the mechanics of perception—the staging, the scripting, the pulling of strings in this puppet show of power. Larry Speakes's ***Speaking Out*** (with the writer Robert Pack and a $200,000 advance), for example, portrayed the president as genial but shallow, a man who reads the comics first when he picks up a newspaper. The now famous stories about Speakes's making up presidential quotations were buried deep in the book, as if the press secretary did not know what was newsworthy—or, worse, as if manufacturing quotes were a standard Washington practice, one that did not require commentary. But the press jumped on it. In the ensuing uproar, Merrill Lynch, Speakes's employer after the White House, allowed him to resign his $400,000-a-year job as a vice-president.

Every publisher longs for a Washington book, often for the prestige of having one and being a player. When William Jovanovich, the chairman of Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, decided he wanted Donald Regan's ***For the Record***, he upped Warner's floor bid of $500,000 to $1 million. The original outline stressed Regan's use of the organization and management principles of Wall Street in the White House—and said nothing about astrology. HBJ staffers predicted sales of only 30,000 copies.

When the manuscript arrived, in February this year, Jovanovich rushed the book into print, moving the publication date from October 1988 to May. The sales staff knew nothing of the book's contents; security guards stood watch at the typesetting and printing plants to prevent a leak. The initial printing, of 250,000 copies, was sold out within days. The book was a sensation, well written by Charles McCarry, a distinguished novelist who doubles as a cabinet-level ghostwriter. It reveals in shocking detail how the White House chief of staff fought with Mrs. Reagan over her astrological demands on the president's schedule. Regan defends himself and the president on Iran-contra and then wreaks his revenge on the first lady because he was "fired like a shoe clerk."

Regan's book qualifies for what Rod MacLeish, a senior Washington commentator, calls "the breaking of the seal on the covenant of conduct and discretion." The publishing of memoirs while the president is still in office has a debilitating effect on trust and discretion, he believes—key elements of governing. When the covenant is broken, governance falters. "People who write or ghostwrite such books while the president is still in office are either fools or scoundrels," says MacLeish. "Fools if they don't understand the system, scoundrels if they do."

Still, the quest for the next best-seller goes on. Big book contracts are like the roll of the dice for publishers, who offer advances on the basis of scanty outlines and hope for the best. New York publishers regularly ascend to the aeries of Washington influentials to build contacts or call on old friendships. What are the next big Washington books editors are scouting? One surely will be the result of a visit by Si Newhouse, the owner of Random House, to the supremely well connected power lawyer Clark Clifford. Clifford came to Washington as a naval aide to Harry Truman in 1945 and has never left; he served as John F. Kennedy's personal lawyer and Lyndon Johnson's defense secretary. The elegant, silver-haired Clifford is known for his straight talk and pervasive influence. It is said that Newhouse offered him $1 million for his memoirs. If he tells the full story of his days in the Pentagon and the struggle with LBJ to end the Vietnam War, it will be worth the price. To help him write the book, Clifford has hired Richard C. Holbrooke, a managing director of Shearson Lehman Hutton and a former editor of *Foreign Policy* magazine.

Meantime, the boom in insiders' books has profited professional writers. Edmund Morris, the prizewinning biographer of Theodore Roosevelt, has a $3 million contract for a history of the Reagan presidency. So far, Lou Cannon's ***Reagan*** is the most richly detailed and analytical biography. Kitty Kelley, the author of biographies of Jackie O. and Frank Sinatra, is writing a biography of Nancy Reagan. Her editor, Michael Korda of Simon & Schuster, says Kelley's advance is the highest ever paid for a nonfiction book, which would put it above $3 million. Simon & Schuster has offered an advance of about $500,000 to Walter Isaacson, a senior editor of *Time* magazine, to write a biography of Henry Kissinger.

The man whose memoirs agents and publishers still want is Secretary of State George Shultz. To date he is staying mum. And high on every wish list for a Washington book are the lives and loves of the Democratic-party high priestess Pamela Harriman, but she, too, has given no sign of interest. A close friend of the late CIA director William Casey's believes he left his memoirs of the Reagan years with his widow, not to be published until after the president leaves office. Bob Woodward, who came out last year with a study of Casey's CIA, insists, in a recent interview with this author, that they do not exist. The insider memoir Woodward would like to read is "by James Baker from his ranch in Texas after he serves as secretary of state in the Bush administration." Then there are all those new authors who will come to town with President Dukakis. . . . □

THE TRUE INSIDERS

These books best express the intensity and complexity of how Washington works. The first four were "power books," written by the men who made history.

The others, written by journalists and novelists, capture the struggle for power and place in Washington, revealing the vanity and weakness of men amid the grandeur of their aspirations. Nobody has written the quintessential Washington novel [illegible] the nation's capital reality [illegible] tion; but MacLeish, Just, and Drury are included because they unlock the emotions accompanying power.

Henry Kissinger, *White House Years* and *Years of Upheaval* (1979, 1982; both Little, Brown)

Harry McPherson, *A Political Education* (1972; Little, Brown)

Richard Nixon, *Six Crises* and *RN: The Memoirs of Richard Nixon* (1962, 1978; Doubleday; Grosset & Dunlap)

Tip O'Neill with **William Novak**, *Man of the House* (1988; Random House)

Tom Ross and **David Wise**, *The Invisible Government* (1964; Random House)

David Halberstam, *The Best and the Brightest* (1972; Random House)

Bob Woodward and **Carl Bernstein**, *All the President's Men* and *The Final Days* (1974, 1976; Simon & Schuster)

Theodore White, *The Making of the President 1960* (1961; Atheneum)

Roderick MacLeish, *A City on the River* (1973; E. P. Dutton)

Seymour M. Hersh, *The Price of Power: Kissinger in the Nixon White House* (1983; Summit Books/Simon & Schuster)

Allan Drury, *Advise & Consent* (1959; Doubleday)

Ward Just, *The Congressman Who Loved Flaubert and Other Washington Stories* (1973; Little, Brown)

William Safire, *Safire's Political Dictionary* (1978; Random House)

—*J. S.*

Jerrold Schecter, a former Washington editor for Time, is author of Back in the [illegible] *and* An American Family Returns [illegible] *Moscow.*

Once upon a time, well-heeled Washingtonians had to go to New York to shop for clothes. Not today. A store that serves this need in Washington, D.C., is Saks Jandel. "I used to have to make four seasonal pilgrimages every year to New York to buy my clothes," sighs Buffy Cafritz, a prominent mover and shaker in the tiny circle of the Washington establishment. "But thanks to the Marx brothers and Val, I now can buy everything here."

The Marx brothers are not a comedy team but the owners of Saks Jandel—which is, in fact, two different collections of boutiques (Saint Laurent, Chanel, Valentino, Karl Lagerfeld, Gucci, Guy Laroche, *et alia*), one at the Watergate, where Ernest Marx's wife, Sally, is in charge, and the other at 5510 Wisconsin Avenue, just beyond the D.C. city limits in Chevy Chase, Maryland. Henry Marx directs the store's financial and administrative affairs. Ernest concerns himself with the merchandise and the salespeople. And Val is, well, just *Val*. (No one seems to call her by anything other than her first name. Her last name is, in fact, Cook.) The unflappable vice-president of Saks Jandel shows *grosses légumes* (which is what the French call big cheeses) around the stores in the same gracious, personal way that Paul Bonwit, Grover Magnin, and Herbert Marcus used to do years ago at Bonwit Teller in New York, I. Magnin in San Francisco, or Neiman Marcus in Dallas.

Making wealthy customers feel at home is half the story. The other is luring them with the exclusivity and quality of the merchandise. It is the only place in Washington where you can buy Saint Laurent Rive Gauche, for instance. In the sixties, when the French and Italians first decided to export their prêt-à-porter clothes, Saks Jandel was the only store in Washington willing to risk buying them instead of handling only the well-accepted American designers, such as Bill Blass. After Marx had made exclusive contracts with these French and Italian designers and then proved that their clothes could be sold in Washington, Saks Fifth Avenue, Neiman Marcus, I. Magnin, and Bloomingdale's put pressure on those designers to sell to their Washington branches. But the designers honored their commitments to Marx. When the boss of Bloomingdale's, Marvin Traub, and his satellite executives went to Paris and tried to lean on Yves Saint Laurent's partner, Pierre Bergé, it didn't work.

"Bergé is a man who keeps his word," says the slim, five-foot-eleven, sixty-eight-year-old, Saint Laurent–suited Marx, in a soft, faintly German-accented voice. Pierre Bergé's opinion of Marx was made obvious last April when he asked him to take complete charge of Yves Saint Laurent furs in North America.

Delivering Good

aks Jandel became the headquarters of fashi

HAIR MARIE MAKEUP BILL WESTMORELAND ASSISTANT INGRAM PAGE 93

Val Cook, Saks Jandel's elegant and witty vice-president, casts a critical eye on a Chanel cape.

Taste

Washington

By Leon Harris
Photographs by Maggie Steber

A Christian Lacroix evening dress can be seen at all angles in the Couture Salon.

"Many politicians, especially Democrats, don't want

This means that many of Marx's competitors—Neiman Marcus, Bloomingdale's, Magnin—must now come to Marx to buy the furs for their stores. Marx, of course, will be delighted to sell them all they can pay for—but, needless to say, not one piece for their branches in Washington.

The aura of exclusivity and quiet privilege extends to the store's decor. On the right, as you enter Saks Jandel's Chevy Chase store, is the black, gray, and white Saint Laurent boutique, designed by Andrée Putman. Next to it, the Valentino boutique has the same beige and marble and shiny black cabinets as Valentino's Madison Avenue shop. The severe chrome, black, and [illegible] Boutique is modeled on that of the [illegible] in Paris. Next to it, the Karl [illegible] nearly as understated as [illegible] departments. Only two [illegible] of the same, ubiqui- [illegible] much more colorful and kicky, the atmosphere is more exciting. And, next door, the Gucci shop is unique. It was designed when Aldo Gucci was still at the head of his firm and never hesitated to indulge his whims. He hired a naval architect, who put in brass portholes and natural teak decking. The shop, which now sells more men's than women's merchandise, makes the customers feel as though they were shopping on the late, lamented *Leonardo da Vinci.*

It was not until Val Cook came on board, in 1977, and steered customers securely through the choppy waters of "what to wear?" indecision that Washington's wealthy felt truly comfortable. The best-dressed socialite Deeda Blair says, "Until Val went to Saks Jandel, a lot of people, including me, had never heard of the store. But she made us aware of it. She knows everybody and everything about them, so when she's in Paris and sees something for a friend whose daughter is coming out or getting married, she buys it. Val's the very best of San Francisco society and well informed in every area, not just

own that their wives shop in a store as expensive as Saks Jandel."

fashion but also what's going on up on the Hill." The *Washington Post*'s publisher, Katharine Graham, is in total agreement: "Val's taste is simply superb, and it has given her a unique role and significant stature in this city."

Tawny, gray-eyed Val, born Edith Taylor Pope into one of San Francisco's pioneer families, might well be the best-known woman in town. (After all, first ladies come and go.) She exudes, in Mark Twain's phrase, "the calm confidence of a Christian with four aces" and a California-golden-girl youthfulness, although her three children are in their twenties. She is at every party in Washington that she chooses to attend and is accustomed to owning planes, handsome homes, Kentucky Derby winners.

Tennis and exercise classes keep her trim, but so does chasing after shoplifters. Six feet tall in heels, Val suggested firmly to a woman who had left the store with a stolen Valentino outfit that she hand it over at once. The terrified shoplifter did so and then leaped onto a passing bus.

Val's favorite tale is about a woman who was in a fury because Val refused to accept the return of some merchandise. (The store's policy is to accept *unworn* clothes if they are promptly returned.) "I'm a personal friend of Val Cook," the woman shouted at her, "and I'm going to get you fired!"

Discretion is the name of the game in Washington, and so it is at Saks Jandel. A Mexican gentleman the store had never heard of phoned to ask if they would open at eight-thirty the following morning because he did not want to be seen in the store by other customers. He arrived, stayed only twenty minutes, and bought eight fur coats without even asking the prices.

Not infrequently, the mountain goes to Mohammed. "When Mrs. Reagan wants things, we take them to the White House," Val explains, "and we do the same for many politicians, especially Democrats, who don't want it known that their wives shop in such an expensive store." And there are other sensitivities, apart from political ones, to consider. "I was once called to a fitting room to help a man who was shopping with his current mistress," says Val. "Then a saleswoman handed me a note saying that the man's wife, who was only three fitting rooms away, wanted me to help her. That was a very tense hour or so, but not as bad as when I went into a fitting room with a lady who took off her clothes and was, in fact, a gentleman."

What happened? "Well, I didn't lose the sale," Val laughs.

Tact and unpushy salesmanship have their own rewards. "Most customers judge a store by the last salesperson who waited on them, so our saleswomen are crucial to our reputation," says Marx. "Bloomingdale's and Nordstrom's branches in Washington pay their salespeople a commission on what they sell, but I am convinced that this makes them too aggressive and leads to 'She's *my* customer' fights." He pays his salespeople a salary because he prefers that his customers feel free to change saleswomen and that his saleswomen care equally about all customers. "Our girls are good, very good," he says. "A number of them sell over half a million dollars a year, or an average of over $2,000 a day."

Although Marx's saleswomen try to serve all customers well, they agree, when he is out of earshot, that what makes selling fun are the famous customers, who include such Washington celebrities as Barbara Bush, Joan Mondale, Nancy Kassebaum, and Katharine Graham. Among the salespeople's favorities are the all-star basketballer Moses Malone, TV's Wonder Woman Lynda Carter, the columnist and sometime marksman Carl Rowan, and "Baby Shah" (twenty-seven-year-old Reza Pahlavi). Some, like Mercedes Kellogg, are missed. "Now that she's got *real money*," confides a veteran *vendeuse*, "I wish she'd move back to D.C."

Less visible but no less crucial to Saks Jandel's success are its sixteen fitters and seamstresses, all under the command of the blond, Beirut-born Irene Carmi. "We're under a lot of pressure. Our customers want everything immediately," she explains, "like Elizabeth Taylor when she was still married to Senator John Warner. One afternoon we went to her house to fit her in a navy

Saks Jandel's owner, Ernest Marx, and his Lakeland terrier, Amy, oversee the fur department.

Irene Carmi, left, makes the minute adjustments that often make the dress.

The store first makes its customers feel at home and then lures the

Gianfranco Ferre suit and coat with a silver-fox boa. She wanted to wear it the next morning, but she was so sweet, so friendly and nice, we were glad to work late and get it done for her."

Many prominent women, such as Nancy Kissinger, Pat Buckley, and Casey Ribicoff, purportedly never buy at retail but instead go to Bill Blass, Oscar de la Renta, and other top-seeded Seventh Avenue manufacturers, who sell to them at wholesale prices because they want the publicity as well as their friendship. On this subject Val is disarmingly candid. "Of course I have taken some Washington women who want to buy wholesale to Seventh Avenue. If it's a State Department wife who could not otherwise afford the clothes, for example, I think we should help see to it that she represents America fashionably. After all, the French and Italian couturiers give their clothes to women who can get them publicity. When Barbara Bush and Torie Steele wear Saks Jandel fur, it's a great advertisement for us. They *deserve* discounts."

Ernest Marx points out that many famous New York furriers who sell supposedly at wholesale to an individual often actually charge her more than she would be likely to pay for a comparable fur at Saks Jandel or at another top retailer. "Here, we avoid the middleman's profit by making many of our fur garments in our own workroom from furs we buy ourselves and by supplying our own patterns and pelts to manufacturers, who then make them exclusively for us."

Marx attends the Sojuzpushnina fur auctions, in Leningrad, where from time to time he (like Neiman Marcus or Bergdorf Goodman) decides to buy the "top bundle" of sable, mink, or lynx and reap the resultant worldwide publicity for having paid the top price that year. Because the quality of the skins in the top bundle is not substantially better than that of the skins in the other premium bundles, most of the higher price is charged off to publicity and is not reflected in the price of the coat. When he is asked why he and the other American buyers do not agree in advance that one buy the top lynx and another the top sable, and so avoid driving up the prices, Marx confides, "That may once have been possible, but now the Japanese have gotten into the game, and money means nothing to them."

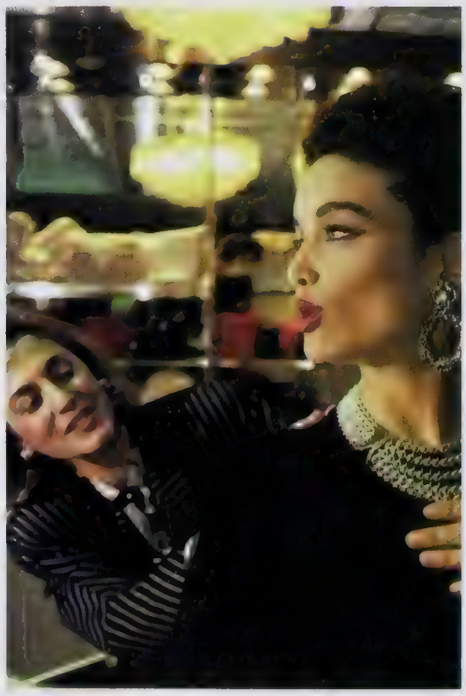
After he came to America from Munich, in 1938, Marx was for many years a furrier and still takes a special pride in his fur collection. "We have a collection here of several dozen sable coats. Some famous fashion chain stores may advertise a sable event for three days and assemble that many coats from their stores all across the country, but after the three days the coats go back to the other stores, in Chicago, Dallas, and Boston. We think a woman ought to have more time to consider, before deciding on that large an investment."

Has Marx ever refused to custom-make a fur garment for a customer because he thought it vulgar? "We sometimes suggest improvements," he confesses sotto voce, "but finally we give the customer what he wants. When a developer asks for a Russian sable coat for his Maltese terrier, we make it. I've even designed a white mink coat for a newborn baby, the daughter of a Kuwaiti prince whose father was the ambassador from Kuwait. Over the years, the prince had become such a good customer that we made a gift of it.

"But, of course, we also have some customers who are less attractive. We want to do everything reasonable to please them, but we don't want to be taken for fools. A famous singer wanted a mink cape changed to her specifications and delivered before midnight, so I kept a fur finisher working late to make the changes, and we delivered it to her hotel on time. She sent it back saying it had arrived too late to wear. We pointed out that her used, monogrammed handkerchief and her hotel key were still in the pocket when she returned it and that these facts would certainly prove that she had used it. She sent her check."

Clearly, Marx does not back away from a fight, although he says he is shy. When Saks Fifth Avenue (which was opened in 1924 and is now owned by the British American Tobacco compa-

The Right Stuff [illegible]



Audible in the din of state dinners: earrings and necklace from the boutiques of Marlene Stone, left.

h the exclusivity and quality of the merchandise.

Suitable for filibustering the Senate floor: a fox-trimmed Louis Féraud suit.

ny) tried to stop his using the Saks name, Marx pointed out that the Saks family had been using the name in Washington for years. A trademark judge ruled in Marx's favor.

No store, of course, survives on selling only to movie and sports stars or other famous folk. Saks Jandel mainstays are the wives, daughters, and mistresses of simple Maryland multimillionaires and Virginia construction tycoons.

"We have only a dozen or so customers," says Marx, "whose accounts amount to six figures every year, and perhaps another two dozen who annually spend $50,000 to $100,000, although with the price of Barguzin sable and Russian lynx being what it is, there are a lot of people who spend that much once in a single year."

Last year, in some 15,000 square feet, Saks Jandel had sales of about $13 million, or well over $800 per square foot. One thing that accounts for these stratospheric sales figures is what Saks Jandel does *not* sell: cosmetics, shoes, underwear, home furnishings. Instead, the focus is very narrow—expensive clothes and furs and a few expensive, often one-of-a-kind, accessories.

Recently, Marx has shown some interest in the younger, middle-rich woman. Next to his Chevy Chase boutiques that sell $8,000 to $12,000 Valentino and Chanel dresses, and furs for ten times those prices, he opened last March an additional, 3,200-square-foot shop called the Right Stuff. "We hope to keep prices below $400, so young women can buy here," explains Marx. "In that shop we sell designers such as Come See, Donna Parker, a.b.s. California, and After Five. We expect to do about $1,250,000 the first year."

If he meets that sales projection, Marx will be selling almost $400 per square foot. Clearly he is not expecting the Wrong People to be shopping at the Right Stuff. □

Leon Harris is the author of Merchant Princes.

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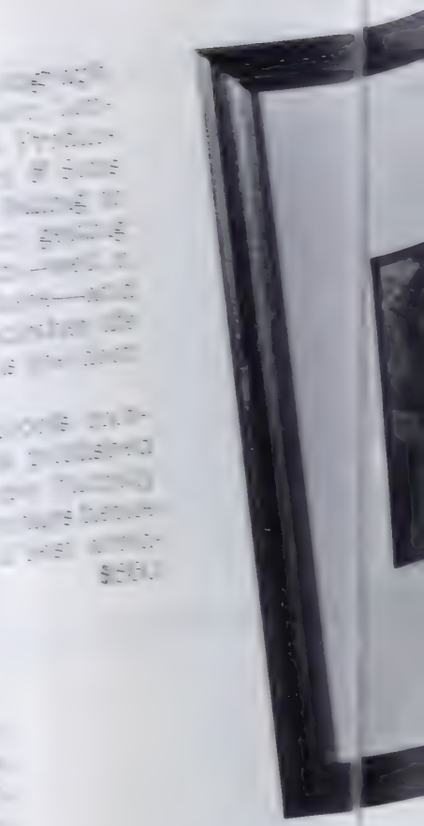
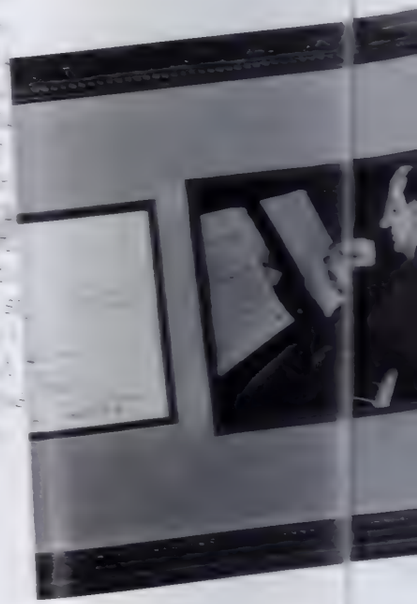
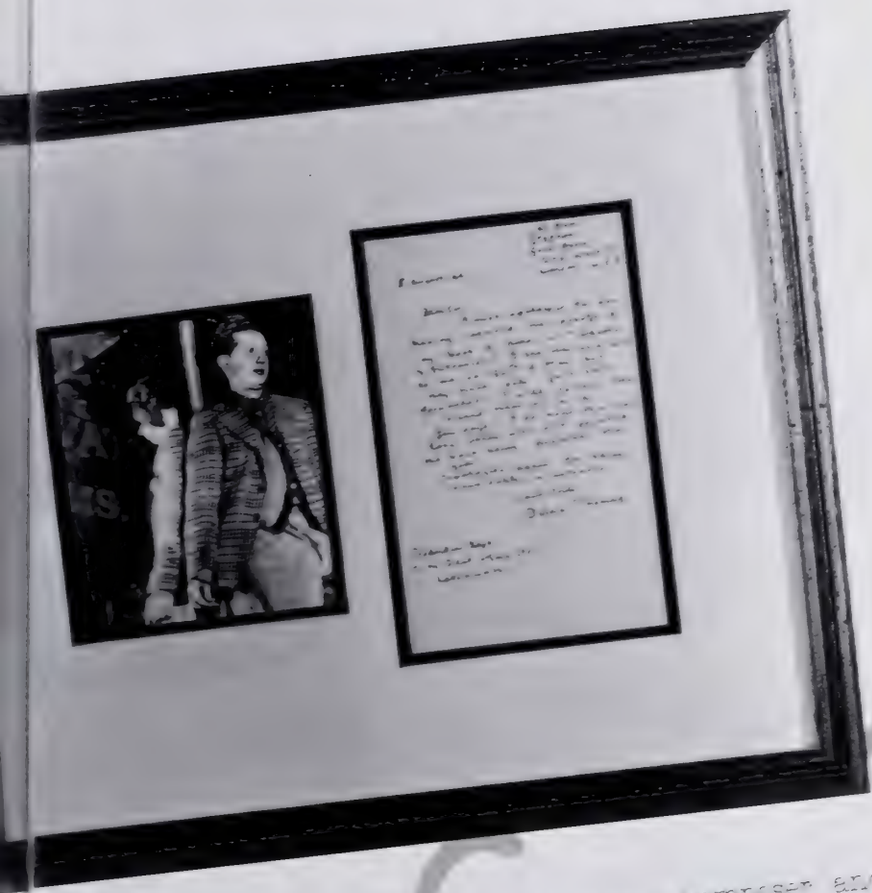


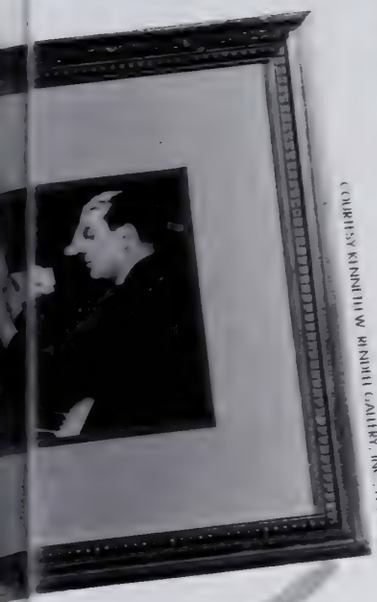


EDGAR DEGAS.

by
Gerald
Dumas



COLE PORTER. American composer and lyricist. Autograph musical quotation signed, two measures on a four- by five-inch sheet. The composer has penned two measures from the refrain of "My Old Kentucky Home" and inscribed it "For Minka Stein," a person who had apparently written to Porter under the delusion that he was the composer of the famous Stephen Foster song. Porter was widely known for his savage wit. With a photograph of the composer seated at his piano, looking weary. $1,150.



COURTESY KENNETH W. RENDELL GALLERY, INC., N.Y.C. (2)

GEORGES BRAQUE. In the autograph at left, in gray, the French painter has playfully turned the letter G into a cartoon face, as if to display an otherwise unnegotiable talent. $675.

l lavish, has a dressing area separate from the bedroom.

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Astonishingly for a place so clearly built to please, Amanpuri has no room service. This oversight is baffling. If you want dinner in your room, you must order it four hours before you eat. But that is a quibble. So blissful is Amanpuri that guests make a solemn ritual of "sunset." We would park ourselves on the terrace, angling our chairs to face Pansea Bay. As the sky went all hues of hibiscus, coral, and angry orange, we agreed: nothing is so fine as Amanpuri. And it is all by design. □

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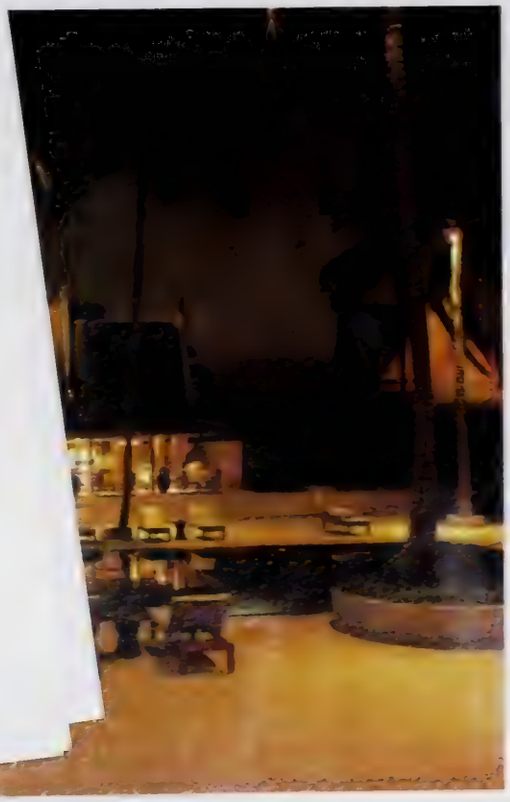

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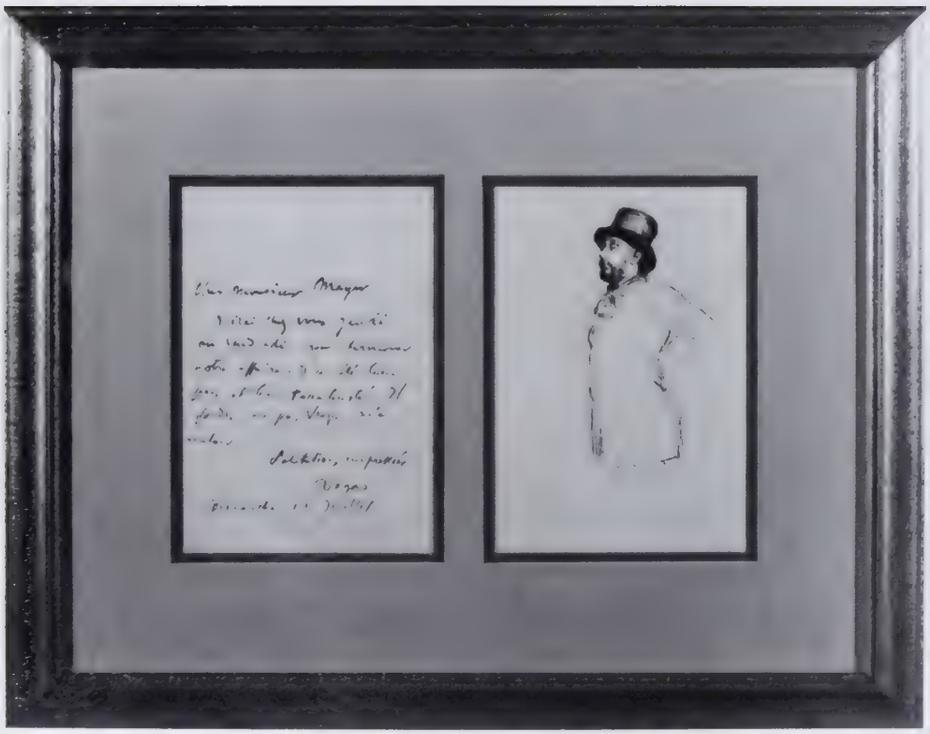


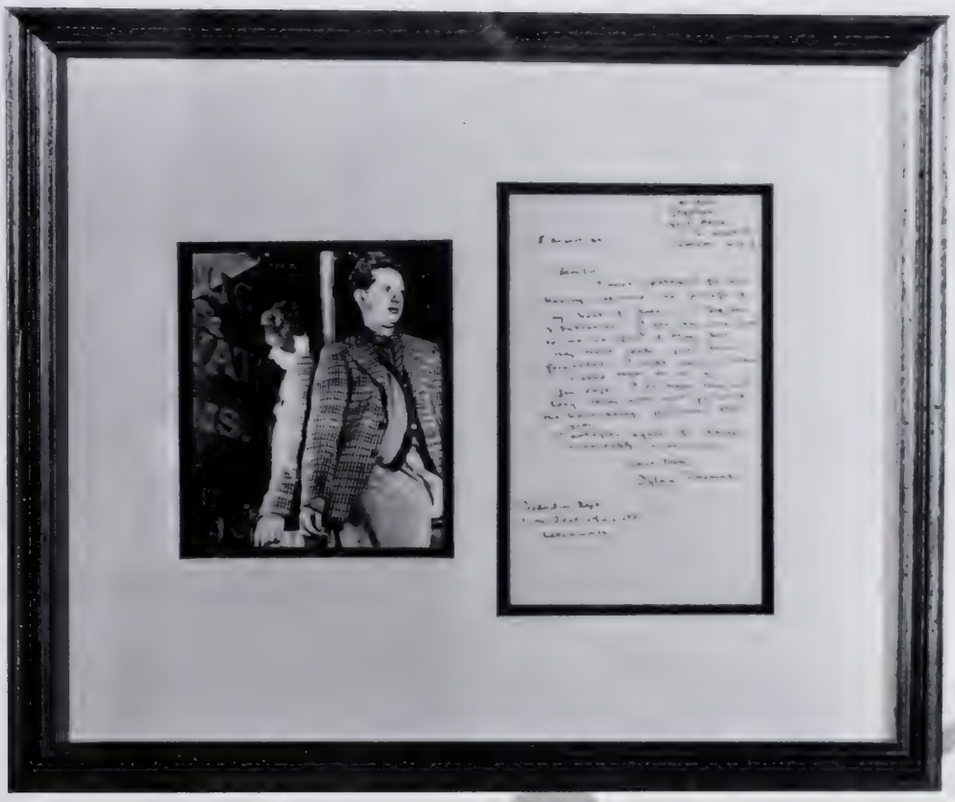
COURTESY KENNETH W. RENDELL GALLERY, INC., N.Y.C.

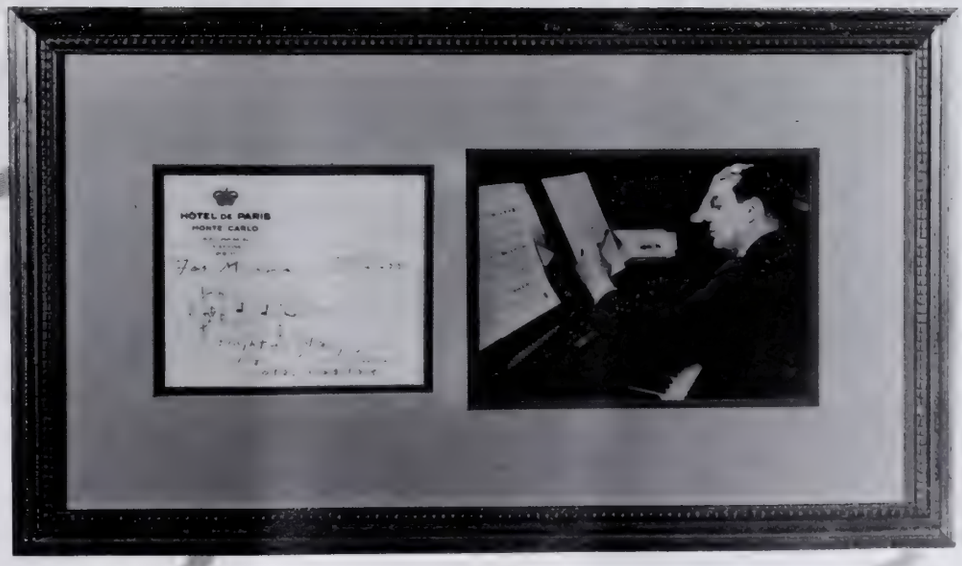
EDGAR DEGAS. French Impressionist painter, known especially for his scenes from the ballet. Autograph letter signed "Degas," one page, octavo, July 17, no year. To Mme. Mayer. "I will come to see you Thursday or Friday. I warn you that I paint only ballerinas, nudes, and horses. But no nude ballerinas, no nude horses. I have been very busy and much bothered. I will come to see you Monday or Tuesday. Or perhaps Saturday or Sunday. But definitely not Friday. Or Thursday." Fine condition. Illuminates mental state of Degas to an extent hitherto unknown. Framed in tan, black, and gilt with an etched portrait of Degas back when he had all his marbles. $1,250.

by Gerald Dumas

DYLAN THOMAS. Welsh poet. Autograph letter signed, one page, octavo, London, August 2, 1945. To the Production Department, J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd. "I must apologize for failing to reply sooner. I have been getting home late most nights from—well, it doesn't really matter where—and what with one thing and another life has . . . excuse me, there is the door. More later.

"Later. In any event proofs coorrected soon prevent book published forwarded, and do hope funnily enoughhh world wide few days hence apologies againe and all best avoidably." Fine condition. $850.





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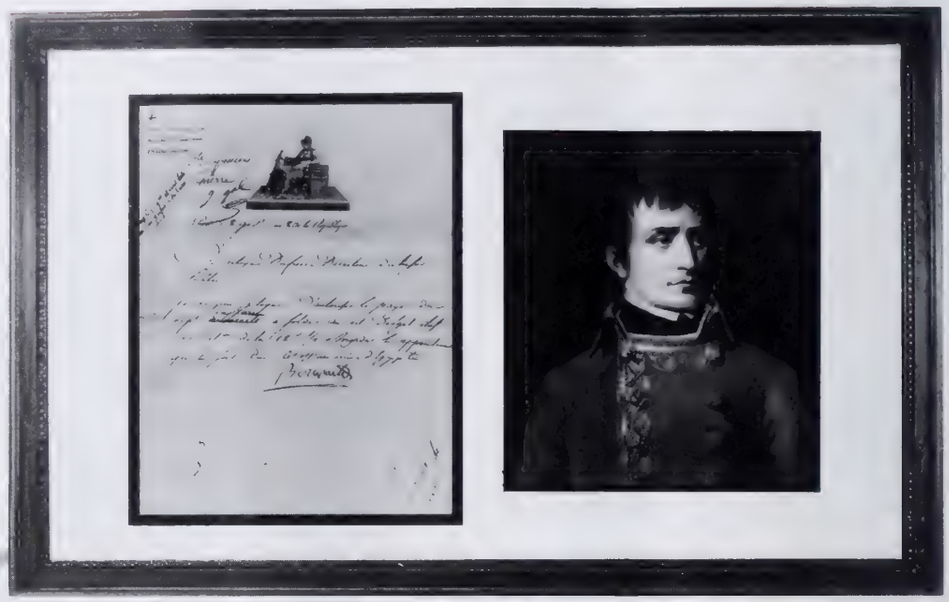
GEORGES BRAQUE. In the autograph at left, in gray, the French painter has playfully turned the letter [illegible] face [illegible] other [illegible] tale[illegible]

NAPOLEON BONAPARTE. Emperor of France. Manuscript L.S., in French, octavo, Paris, *le 3 Nivôse an IX* (December 23, 1800). To Lamarck. An irritated Napoleon writes: "Your comment to the effect that I have caused the needless deaths of one hundred thousand Frenchmen has reached my ears. You are quite incorrect. I am one short. Please see me at your earliest convenience." A fine letter, written just before the mysterious disappearance of Lamarck. $1,600.



AUTOGRAPH, COURTESY DAVID SCHULSON AUTOGRAPHS, N.Y.C.
PORTRAIT, THE BETTMANN ARCHIVE

COURTESY KENNETH W. RENDELL GALLERY, INC., N.Y.C.

DAVID G. FARRAGUT. Union admiral in the Civil War. Letter signed, one page, octavo, flagship *Tennessee*, New Orleans, April 7, 1864. To Mr. Peale, laundry room. "Sir, My directive was, and remains, starch in my shirts, not starch in my underclothing. The shirts, do you understand, the shirts and only the shirts. How many confounded times must I repeat it? Yours ever cordially . . ." Seventeen and a half inches by fourteen inches. $65.

ALBERT EINSTEIN. German-born physicist; enunciated the theory of relativity. Handwritten letter signed, one page, quarto, Berlin, May 27, 1929. To Schweikert. "I have utterly no idea what on earth you are talking about." A fine early example. Framed in rust and gilt, with a rather sheepish portrait photograph. Seventeen inches by fourteen inches. $1,875.

AUTOGRAPHS, COURTESY DAVID SCHULSON AUTOGRAPHS, N.Y.C. PORTRAIT: THE BETTMANN ARCHIVE

HENRI ROUSSEAU. Also known as Le Douanier, also known as the False Rousseau, also known as Camille Schoenberg, which in fact he was. Schoenberg traveled widely, impersonating Rousseau, whom he never met. Such was the brilliance of his conversation and his acting prowess that he was accepted as the genuine article in all the finest homes. Rousseau himself should have been so lucky. This is a receipt, A.D.S., in French, [illegible] vo, Paris, October 30, 1909. The receipt, signed by Schoenberg in Rousseau's handwriting, is for fifty francs, for a painting. Schoenberg's imitation of Rousseau's signature is scarce, hence much more valuable than Rousseau's own, which is available everywhere. Together with a portrait of Schoenberg in dim light, also quite rare. $[illegible],500.

Gerald Dumas, a writer and New Yorker *cartoonist, often contributes to* Connoisseur.

These steps, as dramatic as a set for *Aida*, lead from the white-sand beach up to the hotel's reception area, restaurants, and pool.

Photographs by Richard Blight

Place of Peace

THE MAKINGS OF A UNIQUE RESORT IN THAILAND

By Carol Isaak Barden

Going to heaven is perfectly easy. If you start in Houston, as I did, you just fly to Los Angeles and then catch a flight to Tokyo. There, you change planes and head south for Bangkok, and then change again for Phuket. When you land, you have traveled for thirty-six hours to get to the sleepy town of Phuket City (population: 45,000). You are still twenty minutes by car from paradise.

Phuket (pronounced poo-*ket*) is a tropical island, lying off the west coast of Thailand in the Indian Ocean. Somewhat smaller than Guadeloupe, it has thickly forested mountain slopes, tumbling waterfalls, sprawling rubber and coconut plantations, miles of powdery, palm-fringed white beaches, and several pleasant resorts that are still largely undiscovered.

It was on this tranquil, unsung island that Adrian Zecha, an Indonesian businessman, built his dream resort—one for the privileged few, with splendid food, clairvoyant service, and just forty rooms. Actually, the hotel began as an altogether different project. Owner of a palatial compound in Bali, Zecha wanted a home above the equator that would be dry during Bali's rainy season. Phuket nicely filled the bill.

Above: Across Amanpuri's huge swimming pool is its open-air reception area, designed in classical Thai style. Below: Orchid-draped, a carved Buddha welcomes guests to the hotel.

In 1984 he found the site, a coconut farm on Pansea Bay, in Phuket, and began trying to buy it. Not an inch of ground was acquired without a long and bitter fight. The boundaries were obscure; the disputes with the owning families, constant. No one before had attempted such a thorny purchase; but three years later, Zecha had pieced together a seductive 100-acre parcel, on a steep hill that rose from a sandy beach to an elevation of 130 feet overlooking the sea.

Zecha is a Buddhist who believes that things happen as they happen. What happened was that he decided not to build his house. "I had always dreamed of owning a tiny hotel," he explains. "I wanted to break all the rules and create a gentle resort, one that is not hip, a refuge from the banal stereotype."

He named the hotel "Amanpuri," a Sanskrit word meaning place of peace, and called a Brahman priest to bless the property. The priest predicted that the hotel would be mightily successful; it was an auspicious omen. The owner smiled, and construction began.

The pool, at the very heart of the hotel, overlooks the azure waters of Pansea Bay.

Zecha, a dark, compact man, knew precisely what he was doing. From 1974 until 1986, he was one of the three partners owning the Regent Group, an association of fourteen luxury hotels, including the famous Hong Kong Regent and Manhattan's Mayfair Regent. After selling his interest, he began plans to build several hotels in Asia and Europe, some of them scheduled to open in 1988, and bought a chain of forty-four hotels in the Pacific. He is a shareholder in the Madison Hotel in New York, currently undergoing renovation, and is a director of Orient Express Hotels.

"What do you most hate about beach resorts?" I ask him.

"Everything," he replies. "There's something to offend everyone." Zecha believes in the luxurious; and the man whose taste he most trusts is Edward Tuttle, a forty-three-year-old American architect living in Paris. Tuttle earned that trust by designing Zecha's Bali compound and his home in Hong Kong. (Other work includes the interiors of the Bali Hyatt Hotel, the shah of Iran's winter palace on Kish Island, and the renovation of the Museum of the City of Athens.) Handsome and reserved, Tuttle could not resist Zecha's latest fantasy. "He wanted all of the sophistication and the services of the grandest hotel, but none of the pretense or frenzy," Tuttle recalls. "Above all, he wanted to be sure the place would be tranquil and serene."

While Amanpuri's isolation accounts for much of its tranquillity, its serenity comes from Tuttle's deft touch. To prepare for his task, he visited the finest examples of northern Thai architecture, including the temples of Ching Mai. "Thai architecture is logical and orderly and pure," he says. "You don't mess with perfection."

Tuttle and Zecha proceeded to junk the traditional design scheme, the formula of six stacked floors serviced by two elevators. "I didn't want to be cooped up in a box," Zecha explains. They eliminated the usual elevators and cashier's area, nightclubs, discos, souvenir shops, and all the hackneyed resort services. Although Zecha never forgot the bottom line, the hotel was always treated as a residential space. "I wanted Amanpuri to feel like a grand private home where travelers would be received as honored guests," he says.

To that end, the architect designed forty private pavilions perched variously on the hillside, above a reception area, a huge pool, two restaurants, and a bar, with the beach below. Each pavilion resembles a tiny Thai temple, each has a magnificent view, and each is not more than five minutes' walk from the central reception area. "I looked to nature for solutions and allowed the coconut palms to set the rhythm," Tuttle says. These bedroom units were suspended off the ground on stilts, which also served to protect the lush landscape from erosion. The supporting columns were designed to resemble palm trunks. Seen from a distance, the pavilions fit discreetly among the trees and appear to float celestially in space.

Somehow, Tuttle respected Thai proportions, while at the same time accommodating king-size beds, large baths, and dressing areas. Each pavilion was designed on an L-shaped platform, 1,200 square feet in size. The long end of the L holds a structure with two rooms, a spacious bedroom, and a bath–dressing area. On the short end is an open-air pavilion, where guests can read, nap, sunbathe, or entertain friends.

"If you put quality first, the profit will follow," says Zecha. Obeying that precept, he gave Tuttle carte blanche in design. As Tuttle tells it, "Zecha is a great believer in letting people cook their own goose."

Construction, which was completed with a crane, a few band saws, and hand sanders, took ten months. At one point, there were 1,000 workers on the site, 600 of them living on the property. Many of the carpenters and finishers came from Bangkok, where they were regularly employed at the royal palace. "The first pavilion was built and torn down three times before the workers got it right," Tuttle says. "Had we

The architect and owner, lovers of Thai art, used the Buddha in the reception area to lend an air of serenity to the hotel as well as to beautify it. The floors, walls, and columns are of rich local woods.

been building in the West, we would have gone broke."

The workers were sometimes confused. "After bathing with a water jar and a coconut scoop, they thought our baths were pretty silly," Tuttle continues. "They would ask, 'How do you bathe in all this space?' And then they would proceed to improvise something totally inappropriate." For all the hysteria, for all the traumas, the workers met Zecha's meticulous standards.

Tuttle's interiors are spare, virtually monochromatic, and serene. There is no chrome, no plastic, no "contract furniture." Everything is made to measure and from local materials. Tabak, a Thai wood, was used for the floors; all furniture, the moldings and columns, and the door framing were carved from maka, an oily, dense wood resembling teak. The mostly cotton fabrics used for cushions, pillows, and bed covers were woven by the Jim Thompson firm located in Bangkok.

The rooms have a monastic, even spiritual, aura. During my stay, surrounded by Thai temple pieces and other works of art, I felt as though I should chant, meditate, and burn incense in my room. In looking for the cause, I discovered that when the hotel was complete, as is customary in Thailand, a "spirit house" was erected, for spirits rudely displaced during construction; they clearly are now happy.

Zecha knows that with the rates he charges—$250 to $300 per suite per day (without food) in the high-season months, between February 1 and April 30—Amanpuri must provide more than peace and serenity. "Most resorts make the usual noise about amenities and service," he says, "but with 300 rooms, they cannot deliver." Zecha has staffed the hotel with 130 Thais, whose smiling answer to your every request is "yes"; there is a personal concierge assigned to each room.

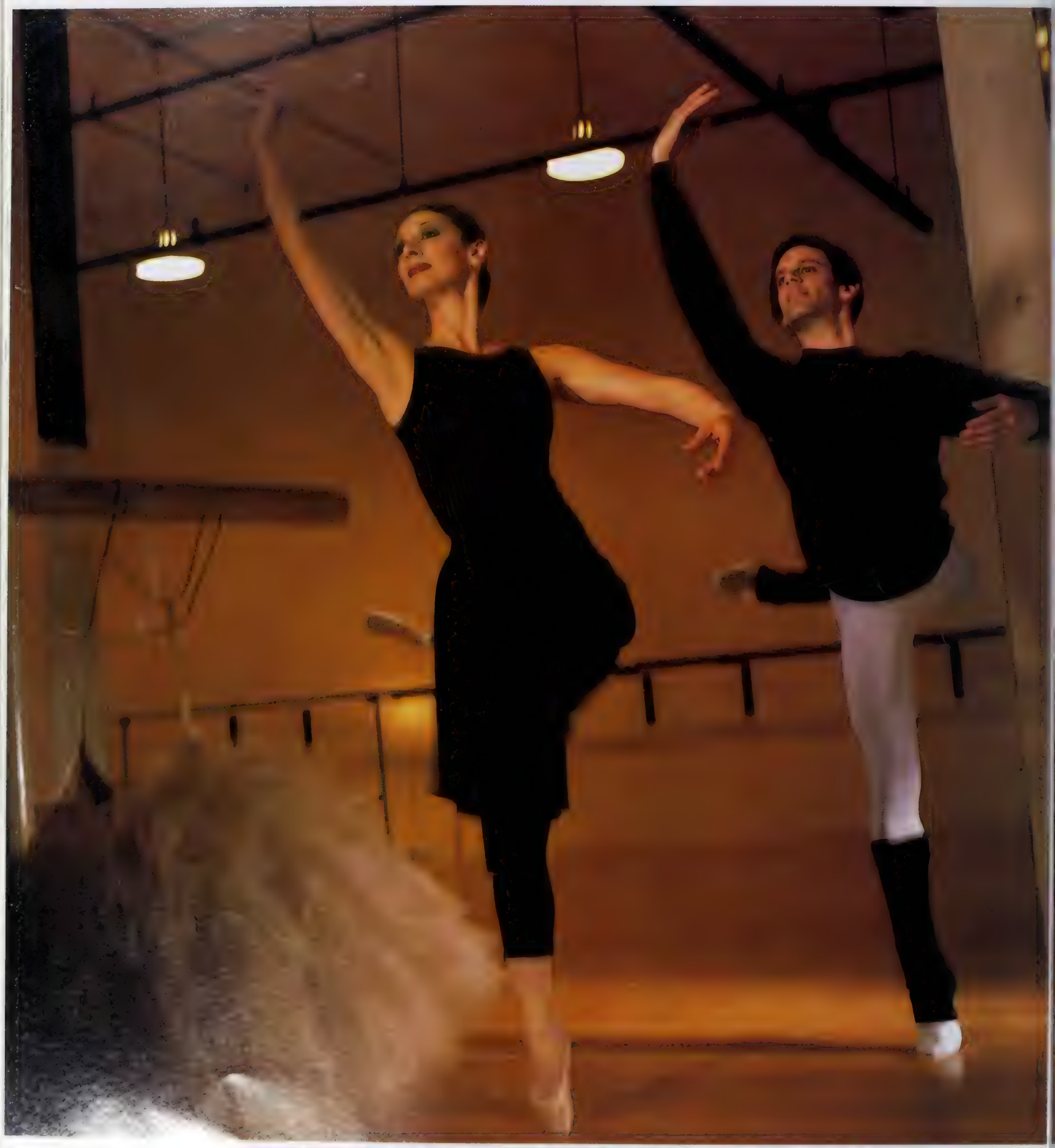
Every guest suite, at once understated and lavish, has a dressing area separate from the bedroom.

Unlike the typical resort, Amanpuri has no nightlife. Instead, it has a tailor on call, a library of books, movies, and tapes, and access to most water sports. You can get a massage or hire one of three yachts for sport fishing and cruising. There are two restaurants, separated by a water garden, on the terrace—one Thai and one Italian—and both are excellent.

Astonishingly for a place so clearly built to please, Amanpuri has no room service. This oversight is baffling. If you want dinner in your room, you must order it four hours before you eat. But that is a quibble. So blissful is Amanpuri that guests make a solemn ritual of "sunset." We would park ourselves on the terrace, angling our chairs to face Pansea Bay. As the sky went all hues of hibiscus, coral, and angry orange, we agreed: nothing is so fine as Amanpuri. And it is all by design. □

Carol Isaak Barden has written about hotels, stores, and travel for this magazine.

The terrace restaurants feature Thai and Italian food, both splendidly cooked and served. No detail was too small for the architect's attention in his quest for an ambience of calm luxury.



[illegible] and Fernando Bujones in the studio. They were first cast together at the Kennedy Center in *La Sylphide* in 1975. [illegible] they recreated—brilliantly—the classic lovers in *Giselle, Swan Lake,* and *The Sleeping Beauty.*

Bravura & Passion

Cynthia Gregory and Fernando Bujones together again

By Stephen Greco

Fernando Bujones always displays impeccable classic form.

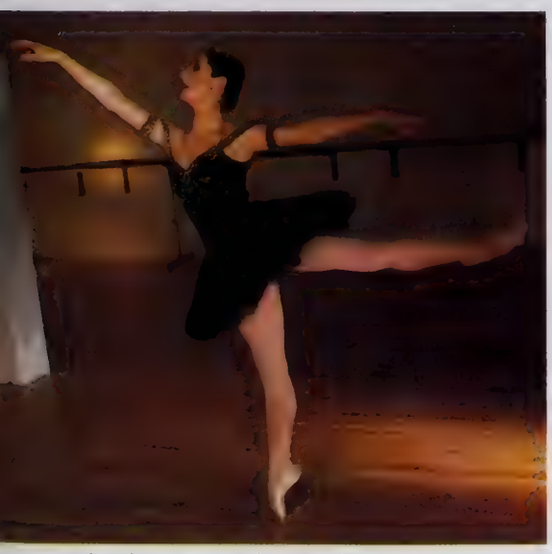
Baryshnikov has the publicity; I have the talent.
—Fernando Bujones *(1979)*

If you're a defector [like Natalia Makarova], *you're already news. But if you are the American boy or girl next door, you are very definitely not news.*
—Cynthia Gregory *(1979)*

Such resentment was forgivable. Bujones and Gregory were and have remained among the finest dancers America has produced. Yet even at the height of the much-vaunted dance boom of the seventies and early eighties, the management of American Ballet Theatre seemed to take them for granted while pampering Makarova and Mikhail Baryshnikov (both richly deserving) with de facto guest-artist status, fat fees, and premieres.

They did not suffer quietly. In 1979, and for years to come, their complaints made headlines. They challenged ABT's management on such matters as salary, working hours, new works, and suitable partners. Gregory quit once and returned to ABT after nine months—an eternity in a dancer's life. And in 1985, citing lack of artistic challenge and inadequate support from Baryshnikov, who had become artistic director in 1980, Bujones quit to go free-lancing in Europe, South America, and Canada. For a long time it has looked as if the thrilling partnership that Gregory and Bujones had begun might never be resumed.

This month, at New York's City Center, Gregory and Bujones are back together at last. Heading a company of sixteen, hand-picked for the occasion, they will offer a program including selections from their legendary pas de deux, as well as two specially commissioned works, and the entire third act of *Coppélia*. Anyone who has forgotten (or has never known) the Gregory-Bujones magic will see instantly what we have too long been missing.



At five feet seven inches, Cynthia Gregory is too tall for most partners.

At five feet seven inches [illegible] pointe, Gregory, forty-two, is tall for a ballerina, and her noble line and imposing technique can easily overpower a lesser dancer. Bujones, thirty-three, *is* tall enough—and has a nobility of line that matches hers. They make a stunning stage couple.

"I'm disappointed that destiny has taken me away from my partnership with Cynthia," Bujones says now, "but the experience I've gained has made me a better artist."

In London, his diamond-clear classicism brought him ovations in *La Bayadère* and Frederick Ashton's *Rhapsody* (which, irony of ironies, was created for Baryshnikov). Much of the other repertoire he has been exploring is less refined—and this, to many of his admirers, seems sad. He is said to be sensational as Alexander the Great in *Trois Études pour Alexandre*, not yet seen here, a new work created for him by Maurice Béjart—a popular choreographer who to many American dance poohbahs is strictly anathema.

Gregory, too, has continued to mature in circumstances that are not all that her admirers could wish for. During ABT's season at the Met this spring, she was looking radiant [illegible] her pregnancy, though her partners were no better than all right, and the repertoire was mostly safe," providing her with vehicles to show off her technique rather than [illegible] many ways of [illegible]

That technique—like her favorite partner's—is a marvel in itself; but for Bujones, other qualities of Gregory's loom larger. "Comprehension, musicality, sensitivity—these are crucial," he says. "Cynthia has them all. In a partnership, both sides need to work on the same level, without being pretentious or unnatural. Sometimes ballerinas—or even male dancers, for that matter—have an ego so big that they cannot put themselves in their partner's position. That can really be deadly."

"Even though Fernando's a bit younger than I am, we were both brought up in the same era," Gregory says. "Ballet is different now. It's gotten colder. It lacks the soul, the love, it used to have. Yes, it's become a business, and I think some of the humor and the romance have gone out of it."

"I think people like to see our technique, because we do exciting things," the ballerina continues simply. "I can turn and balance for a long time; Fernando can jump and turn and do all that. But beyond the appeal of technique, I think we share a common premise about ballet. We still think of it the way it used to be."

Stephen Greco is a deputy arts editor of New York's newest weekly, 7 Days.

Photographs by [illegible]

BORDEAUX'S GLORIOUS DECADE

America's top wine critic rates the vintages of the 1980s

By Robert M. Parker, Jr.

Bordeaux has never had it so good. The decade of the eighties has produced two spectacular years, 1982 and 1986; two excellent years, 1985 and 1983; one good year, 1981; and three mediocre years, 1987, 1984, and 1980. Unlike the decade of the seventies, in which 1977 and 1972 were disasters, or the dispiriting decade of the sixties, when 1969, 1968, 1965, and 1963 were all of them horrific washouts, or the fifties, in which the 1956, 1954, and 1951 were equally catastrophic, the decade that is now drawing to a close has thus far suffered from three off years that, however, have been by no means appallingly bad, and the consumer has never been faced with wines of less than adequate quality.

heat, luminosity, and rain.

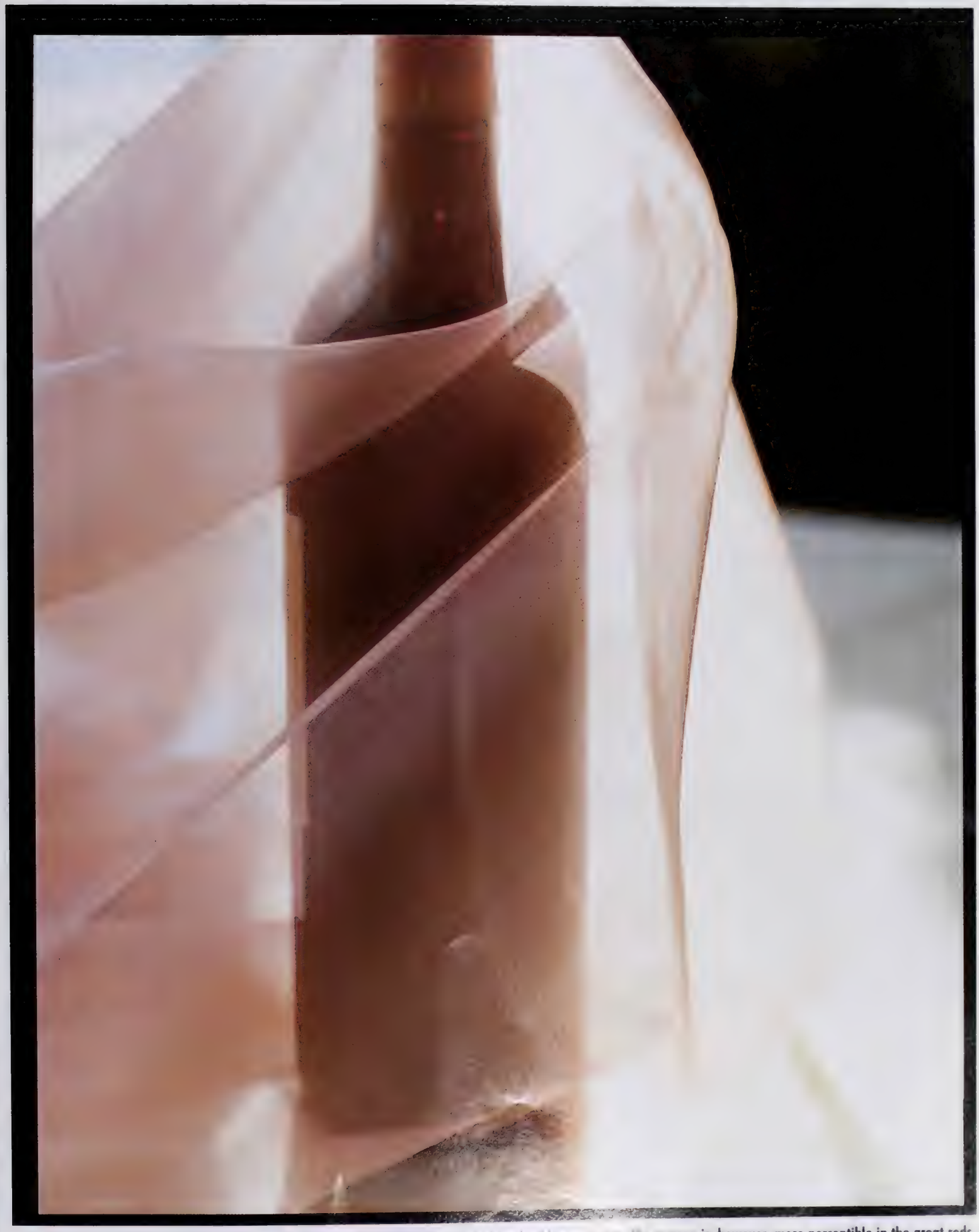
During the decade many Bordelais have made fantastic fortunes. Witness the extraordinary new underground wine cellars of Châteaux Margaux, Lafite-Rothschild, and Pichon-Lalande, or the splendid new aging cellars with marble floors at Léoville Las Cases. Even such conservative châteaux as Lynch-Bages and Cos d'Estournel have designed state-of-the-art tasting rooms. Besides all this, there are newly revivified wineries, like La Mission Haut-Brion and Pontet Canet, with sparkling, high-tech, computer-monitored facilities. Ten years ago a drive through the Bordeaux region with visits to the châteaux would have been little different from such a tour fifty or sixty years earlier, but today nothing is as it was. Just about every top château has made significant investments in its wine-making facilities and its vineyards.

The huge, successful crops of the eighties, however, have made for a badly saturated marketplace over the last several years, and prices are on the descent in Bordeaux (the 1987 wines have been released at prices 30 percent lower than the 1986 prices, which in turn were lower than the 1985 prices). Bordeaux, the most consistently great and enjoyable wine on earth, has become a victim of its own success. For the consumer, buying Bordeaux wines as "futures" two years in advance of delivery has not made sense for most châteaux since 1983, for today the supply of good Bordeaux in the pipeline seems endless. With that in mind, it may be a good idea to take a look at all the Bordeaux vintages of the eighties, considering what they offer in quality, style, and value.

1987

In view of all the dreadful reports about this vintage that have leaked out, some people may be surprised to learn that the better wines from this large crop are more appealing and of higher quality than those of the two other mediocre years, 1980 and 1984. September heat and sunshine saved the 1987 vintage. Two weeks of intensive tastings revealed that the early-picked merlot was ripe and healthy, rendering good, fruity, soft wines, commercial, no doubt, but pleasant. Unhappily, the harvest rains virtually

Photographs by Maria Robledo



How wine ages in the bottle remains a mystery to be [illegible] The process is, however, more perceptible in the great reds.

The less good years—1987, 1984, and 1980—are still very drinkable.

MAP AND CHART BY BETTE DUKE

ruined the cabernet franc and the early-picked cabernet sauvignon, but the very late harvesters managed to salvage some decent cabernet sauvignon.

Overall, the 1987 clarets will require drinking very young—between 1989 and 1996—but they can be charming wines of medium body. Happily, they have none of the vegetal, austere characteristics of such years as 1984 and 1980. The top successes are in Graves, Pomerol, and the classified growths of the Médoc. The dry white wines of Bordeaux, harvested under excellent conditions, are very good, better than the 1986s, and, while lighter, not far behind the tasty 1985 whites. It is too early to judge the sweet white wines of Sauternes and Barsac.

All things considered, 1987 is likely to provide some surprisingly pleasant, soft, clean, fruity wines, but it looks as if the market cannot digest them at the moment, and anyone, consumer or member of the wine trade, would be foolish to buy them now unless the prices drop by 35 to 50 percent. If that happens, the first growths and super seconds (châteaux recognized by the trade as making wines close to or of first-growth quality) merit a look by anyone wanting a Bordeaux ready to drink in several years.

1986

In the Médoc, from Margaux to Saint-Estèphe, the quality of the 1986 vintage is very good, sometimes exceptional. Less wine was produced at many classified châteaux than in 1985, the selection process was extremely severe, and the resulting wines are very powerful and rich, denser in color than the 1985s. The wines are marked by the cabernet sauvignon grape, which did well in this [illegible] the highest level of tannins ever measured. [illegible] (1) the extraordinary potential of twenty-[illegible] the vintage's wines, thanks to their fierce tannins and concentration; (2) the far deeper color and more concentrated flavors than are found in the 1985s; and (3) the sobering thought that only a few of the top wines will be a pleasure to drink before the year 2000. In short, this vintage complements the fruity, soft, medium-bodied 1985s.

But before you get excited about the top 1986 Médocs, consider whether you have the patience to forget these tannic behemoths for a decade or more. Of all the wines of the 1980s, the 1986 most closely resembles the 1975, but wine making is significantly better now than it was ten years ago. No doubt some 1986s will provide disheartening drinking in eight to ten years because of their sharp, aggressive tannins, but in the year 2005 a dozen or so wines will challenge the greatest 1982s and indeed will probably outlive the legends of that extraordinary vintage. While the Médoc was clearly the favored area in this year, especially Pauillac and Saint-Julien, some very fine Graves, some good Pomerols, and a number of Saint-Émilions are much deeper and richer than their counterparts in 1985. Lovers of sweet wine will rejoice over

THE TOP BORDEAUX WINES OF THE 1980s AND WHERE THEY GREW

APPELLATION CONTRÔLÉE	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987
SAINT-JULIEN	Branaire-Ducru Gruaud-Larose Langoa Barton Léoville Barton Talbot	Ducru-Beaucaillou Gruaud-Larose Léoville Las Cases	Ducru-Beaucaillou Gruaud-Larose Léoville Las Cases Léoville-Poyferré	Ducru-Beaucaillou Gruaud-Larose Léoville Las Cases	Gruaud-Larose	Ducru-Beaucaillou Léoville Las Cases	Beychevelle Ducru-Beaucaillou Gruaud-Larose Léoville Las Cases Talbot	Ducru-Beaucaillou Gruaud-Larose Léoville Las Cases Talbot
SAINT-ÉMILION	Cheval Blanc La Dominique	Cheval Blanc	Canon Cheval Blanc	L'Arrosée Ausone Canon Cheval Blanc	L'Arrosée	L'Arrosée Canon Cheval Blanc Le Tertre Rôte Boeuf	L'Arrosée Canon Cheval Blanc Figeac	
POMEROL	Pétrus	Certan de May La Conseillante Pétrus	Certan de May L'Évangile Pétrus Trotanoy	L'Évangile Lafleur Latour à Pomerol		Certan de May L'Église-Clinet L'Évangile Lafleur Pétrus	Certan de May L'Église-Clinet Lafleur Pétrus Vieux Château Certan	Pétrus
SAINT-ESTÈPHE	Cos d'Estournel		Cos d'Estournel Haut-Marbuzet		Cos d'Estournel	Cos d'Estournel	Chambert-Marbuzet Cos d'Estournel Meyney Montrose	
MARGAUX	Giscours d'Issan Margaux Siran	Margaux	Margaux	Margaux Palmer Rausan-Ségla	Margaux	Margaux	Margaux	Margaux
PAUILLAC	Lafite-Rothschild Latour Pichon-Lalande	Lafite-Rothschild Latour Mouton-Rothschild	Grand-Puy-Lacoste Lafite-Rothschild Latour Lynch-Bages Mouton-Rothschild Pichon-Lalande	Lafite-Rothschild Lynch-Bages Mouton-Rothschild Pichon-Lalande	Latour Lynch-Bages Mouton-Rothschild Pichon-Lalande	Lynch-Bages Mouton-Rothschild	Mouton-Rothschild Pichon-Lalande	Mouton-Rothschild Pichon-Lalande
PESSAC-LÉOGNAN	Domaine de Chevalier La Mission Haut-Brion			Haut-Brion	Haut-Brion La Mission Haut-Brion	Haut-Brion	Haut-Brion Pape-Clément	Haut-Brion La Mission Haut-Brion
HAUT-MÉDOC	Chasse-Spleen		La Lagune Sociando-Mallet	Cantemerle			Chasse-Spleen Sociando-Mallet	
SAUTERNES	Climens de Fargues d'Yquem							

the 1986 Barsacs and Sauternes. While less powerful than the 1983s, they are more aromatic and complex because the essential "noble rot," or *Botrytis cinerea,* was more in evidence in 1986.

1985

This is a lovely vintage, of medium-bodied, very fragrant, soft wines, most of them destined to be consumed over the next fifteen years while one waits for the hard and powerful 1986s to shed some tannins. The record-setting crop in the Médoc in 1985, however, has prevented most of these wines from reaching greatness. Charming, round, forward, even opulent as the 1985 Médocs are, they lack grip and are low in

This could easily become a collector's item.

acidity and tannin, and the famous first growths, except for Haut-Brion, Mouton-Rothschild, and Margaux, have performed well below the super seconds.

At their best, wines such as the extraordinary Cos d'Estournel, Lynch-Bages, Léoville Barton, Ducru-Beaucaillou, Léoville Las Cases, and Margaux may turn out to be modern versions of the 1953s, but for most of the Médocs this vintage tastes like watered-down 1982s or riper, fruitier 1979s. Pomerol and Saint-Émilion, however, produced some undeniable superstars. Certainly Pétrus, Lafleur, Certan de May, Cheval Blanc, and L'Arrosée made their finest wines since 1982. L'Évangile made as great a wine as its 1982, and L'Église-Clinet the finest wine I

Grapes are only water, cellulose, minerals, sugar, acids, tannin, and oil.

have ever tasted from this property. Yet, once I get past most of the famous names, I have to admit to a degree of disappointment with the other Pomerols and Saint-Émilions; they seem to show, in various degrees, the problems caused by an excessively abundant crop. Both the red and the white Graves are excellent, but the Barsacs and Sauternes lack character and complexity.

Overall, 1985 is a very good vintage that can be drunk early. While its quality is clearly nowhere near that of the stupendous 1982s, nor can it match many of the powerful, rich 1986 Médocs, it should prove to be as good as 1983 and certainly better than 1978, 1979, and 1981.

1984

The late pickers in the Graves and Médoc harvested surprisingly sound cabernet sauvignon, producing wines with good ripeness and color, medium body, and moderate tannins. Because the merlot crop was largely ruined by the summer's poor weather, Pomerol and Saint-Émilion are not appellations in which to search out good 1984s, although there are several exceptions, notably L'Arrosée. The 1984s are compact, narrowly constructed wines wanting in lushness, charm, and fruitiness, but for those who like their Bordeaux on the austere side, there are some wines to consider. Pichon-Lalande is the wine of the vintage. Prices, absurdly high at first for such poor stuff, have come down.

1983

Twenty years ago the torrid heat, precipitation, and tropical [illegible] characterized the month of August 1983 would [illegible] Yet thanks to modern sprays, the [illegible] growers were rewarded with a stunningly perfect September, however hot, and a glorious October. The late harvesters fared the best, and this was an excellent year for Médoc, with excellent cabernet sauvignon. The appellation of Margaux, in particular, a perennial underachiever, had its best vintage since 1961, while such notoriously inconsistent châteaux as Brane-Cantenac, Durfort-Vivens, Rausan-Ségla, and Kirwan made better wines than they had in years. The early cask tastings of the 1983s not only showed the strength of the vintage in the Médoc but also revealed wines that, while ripe and full, were much more noticeably tannic than the opulent 1982s. The crop was again enormous, overall about 8 percent less than in 1982, though in the major Médoc appellations the production per hectare was actually higher than in 1982. The better châteaux ended up putting much more wine under their second labels than they had the year before.

After recently retasting the 1983s, I was surprised that the wines have not closed up as much as I expected. The tannins, once thought to be much more aggressive than in the 1982s, seem to be falling away rather quickly, whereas the higher levels of tannins in the 1982s, initially concealed by the extraordinary fleshiness and opulence of their fruit, are becoming more apparent. At present, most 1983s taste much less concentrated and structured for the long haul than the 1982s.

This vintage will be fully mature before the 1982s are. Its strengths are clearly in the Margaux appellation, followed by Saint-Julien and Pauillac. The Pomerols and Saint-Émilions are certainly good but lack the succulent excitement these wines can attain in top years. The Graves can also be fine, though the overall personality of most of the Saint-Estèphes is boring. For the Barsacs and Sauternes, 1983 is a much-needed top vintage, though 1986 is shaping up as an even better year.

Five years on, 1983 looks like a very good year, though except for a handful of wines it rarely achieves greatness. In the context of the decade, it is clearly superior to 1981 and in appellations like Margaux and Sauternes is better than 1982 and 1985, but overall it will have to take a backseat to 1982, 1986, and 1985. On the bright side, the top 1983s remain realistically priced, since they were purchased when the dollar was at twice its current strength, and some real bargains are still to be found.

1982

While the 1982s remain the most concentrated, complex, and interesting wines since 1961, questions still arise about their potential longevity vis-à-vis other great vintages of this century—1929, 1945, and 1961. During the last year I have tasted most of the 1982s on several occasions and believe that they are unequivocally the most exhilarating wines of this generation. In spite of a handful of writers steadfastly critical of this vintage, the majority point of view is that 1982 is without question the greatest Bordeaux since 1961. Many wines can be drunk early with a degree of pleasure that no other Bordeaux vintage of this century, except for the 1929, can offer.

I find that most of the 1982 Médocs from Saint-Julien, Pauillac, and Saint-Estèphe are firming up considerably; and, despite their dense, black-purple color, fragrant, opulent bouquets, and intense richness on the palate, they remain undeveloped, little different from what they were when tasted from cask. Most of the Médocs, including all of the first growths and the super seconds (except for the soft, somewhat unstructured Palmer), will be ready only at the end of the nineties, which is somewhat later than I originally estimated. My saying this will, I fear, not prevent many of them from being drunk much earlier. The Pomerols and Saint-Émilions are also beginning to show more structure, but it is hard

to resist the opulent, exotic pleasures of wines such as Cheval Blanc, Canon, L'Évangile, Le Pin, and Trotanoy, despite the fact that they have evolved very little since their days in cask.

One hears from the likes of Harry Waugh and Jean-Pierre Moueix that most of the 1947 Pétrus and 1947 Cheval Blanc was also drunk within the first seven or eight years of that historic vintage, but for the life of me I cannot think those wines, no matter how decadently rich and tasty, could have been more enjoyable in 1954–55 than they are today. (I recently gave perfect scores to both in a blind tasting in Bordeaux.) Nevertheless, I suspect the debate over the longevity of the 1982 clarets will go on for another generation. If the ultimate criteria for the greatness of a wine or vintage, however, are the degree of pleasure it gives and the length of time during which it can be enjoyed, then 1982 has no modern peer. I, for one, plan to start drinking the *cru bourgeois* (except for Sociando-Mallet and Poujeaux) in 1990–92, the Pomerols and Saint-Émilions in 1992–95, and the Graves, Saint-Juliens, Pauillacs, and Saint-Estèphes from 1995 onward. The 1982 Margaux wines are very forward and can be drunk in one to two years. All of the top 1982s, if healthy when purchased and properly stored, will drink gorgeously for another ten or twenty-five years, perhaps longer. Despite their precocity, their great fruit and depth will enable them to outlive all the recent vintages except the 1986s. Over the long term this vintage will be remembered best for certain wines likely to be considered in the legendary category that includes the 1929 and 1945 Mouton-Rothschild, the 1928, 1945, and 1961 Latour, the 1945, 1947, and 1961 Pétrus, the 1947 Cheval Blanc, the 1900 Margaux, and the 1953 and 1959 Lafite-Rothschild.

1981

I have found many of the wines from the 1981 vintage lacking generosity and richness, but for admirers of the lighter, less intense, and less powerful Bordeaux vintages a number of fine choices are to be found, particularly in the appellations of Saint-Julien, Pauillac, and Pomerol. In Saint-Estèphe, Margaux, Graves, and Saint-Émilion, the quality is patchy. This vintage, which at first looked so promising and potentially great, was spoiled by the rains that caught everybody off guard just as the harvest was about to begin. For the *crus bourgeois* this is not a very pleasant vintage. Most of the 1981s should be approaching full maturity by 1990–91 and will keep, where well stored, for five to twelve years thereafter.

1980

Sandwiched in between a succession of fine vintages, the 1980 Bordeaux crop is a forgotten stepchild. However, the adventurous wine enthusiast can probably tell a few tales about some surprisingly soft, supple wines that were much tastier than any critic suggested. The vintage was harvested late and suffered from a poor summer, with abortive flowering that diminished the size of the merlot crop. The weather's dramatic improvement in September allowed the grapes to mature, but the harvest that started on October 14 met with rain once again.

The resulting wines are light. Some are rather diluted and disappointing, but a number of sound, fruity, supple wines were produced that, if well chosen, can be drunk and enjoyed at once. A very fine wine was made at Margaux, which continued its record of producing one of the finest wines of the vintage since 1977, when the Mentzelopoulos family took over this estate.

If the vintage was decidedly uninspiring for red wine, the late-harvest sweet wines of Barsac and Sauternes turned out quite well, with the majority of properties picking into late November in ideal weather. Most 1980s are fully mature now, but only a handful will last past 1990. On the whole, then, the 1980s has been one of Bordeaux's most glorious decades. We may not see its like for a long time. □

Robert M. Parker, Jr., is publisher and editor of The Wine Advocate *and author of* Bordeaux, Parker's Wine Buyer's Guide, *and* The Wines of the Rhône Valley and Provence.

Is the glass half full or half empty? The answer could well depend on the wine's vintage.

STAGE WIZARD

Maria Bjornson may now be the world's top theater designer

By Laurie Winer

CLIVE BARDA/WOODFIN CAMP

***Hannibal* in rehearsal, as seen in *The Phantom of the Opera*. The elephant, it later appears, is hollow, offering two stagehands lots of room to play cards.**

On the whole it is more than a little refreshing to hear Maria Bjornson deflate The Event. "I must say I find the hype slightly creepy," says *The Phantom of the Opera*'s thirty-nine-year-old set and costume designer, with a weak laugh. "I mean, it's only a show."

True, but no one who has seen even the first half hour of *Phantom*, representing Bjornson's debut in the musical theater, is likely to take her work quite so casually. Through the cinematic flow of her stage images—a brooding symphony of cos- [illegible] and sweeping [illegible] that is irre- [illegible] tell-told [illegible] the-ater design, Bjornson apprenticed in the early seventies at the Glasgow Citizens' Theatre, a haven for unconventional and sometimes bizarre design and interpretation. There, Bjornson designed thirteen productions in less than two years. She left Glasgow for London in 1972. Over the next fifteen years, working mostly for the English National Opera, the Welsh National Opera, and the Royal Opera at Covent Garden, Bjornson designed nearly fifty operas, including Janáček's *House of the Dead*, which she set amid a labyrinth of cells inside a Siberian prison, and a *Carmen* that unfolded in an old-car-dump shantytown, where the characters lived in Bjornson's metaphor for male aggression: the American motorcar.

"Maria comes out of opera, really," says David Pountney, the inventive director of production at the ENO, who has from the start been one of Bjornson's most frequent collaborators, "and in Britain, opera is much more visually innovative than the theater. So she was able really to free her imagination, and she worked incredibly hard. Her sets were widely different, but they had one thing in common: each would express the core, the very meaning of the work she was designing. The one thing Maria is *not* is a decorator."

Not surprisingly, after a while offers came to Bjornson from the nonoperatic theater, too. Between 1974 and 1984, she designed six plays for the Royal Shakespeare Company, including an acclaimed production of *The Tempest*. Cameron Mackintosh, *Phantom*'s producer, came to

see it and made a mental note. "Cameron was working on *Les Misérables* at the time," recalls Bjornson. "I later asked him what it was that made him approach me to do *Phantom*. He said it was the *Tempest* shipwreck—I had the boat sink into the floor of the stage, and the sail washed up into the sky. That became Prospero's island. I don't even think Cameron stayed for the rest of the show after that."

Bjornson's sharp turn to the big-budget commercial musical brought about some odd juxtapositions, since at the time she also had a project in hand with one of the titans of Europe's musical and intellectual avant-garde. "I think I'm probably the only person in the world who's spoken to Karlheinz Stockhausen and Andrew Lloyd Webber on the same day," she says. "I found that quite amusing." Still, despite her international reputation, Bjornson says she was intimidated by the prospect of *The Phantom of the Opera*. After all, the show involved not only the top-grossing composer but also Broadway's illustrious director Harold Prince. "It was very daunting for me to begin to work with so many veterans of the musical theater," she admits, with no apparent false modesty. "But in a funny sort of way, the more frightened I am, the better things come out. Then I really push myself."

Phantom's opening is a good illustration. The show begins in a bare theater during an auction of operatic memorabilia. A diaphanous curtain sheathes the proscenium. The hem of a much plusher drape, exquisitely pleated and dripping with heavy tassels, hangs suggestively above the auctioneer. A chandelier, shrouded in a drop cloth, sits downstage, like a huge, crumpled Chinese lantern. It has been wired for the new electric light, the auctioneer explains just before he whisks off the drop cloth. "Perhaps," he intones, "we may frighten away the ghost of so many years ago, with a little *illumination*!"

And the throbbing beat of Lloyd Webber's overture begins, with its promise of high Gothic melodrama and the unadorned sexual urgency of rock and roll. Bjornson's now glorious chandelier, brought upright by pulleys, begins its eerie traverse, blinking madly, out into the auditorium. The curtains sweep sideways across the stage like the hem of a great lady's gown in a rapturously slow waltz. The proscenium is revealed, adorned with golden satyrs and nymphs caught in passionate embraces. A gaudy new backdrop—a Phoenician palace—rises from the floor. In one gorgeously protracted moment, the audience has traveled from a bare stage to the full glory of Charles Garnier's Paris Opera at the turn of the century. For an instant, though, there is no one there; then, in another instant, the theater is awash in the bright costumes of a boisterous and cheesy opera rehearsal.

For the first forty-five minutes of *Phantom*, the action is virtually continuous. Before it finally jumps forward, the audience will witness six major scene changes that take place in full view as our heroine goes from the rehearsal (with ten-foot-high elephant, half a dozen chorines, haughty diva, ham tenor, impresarios, ballet mistress, wardrobe mistress, and others) to her debut that evening, to her dusky dressing room, *through* her dressing-room mirror, down a steep-winding passageway, onto the fogbound lake that surrounds the Phantom's lair, and, finally, into the subterranean, candle-lit lair itself.

CLIVE BARDA, LONDON

Bjornson: a workaholic who never loses her cool.

By now, volumes have been written on what it took to bring *Phantom* to the stage. With a production of this scope, it is tempting to chase statistics in order to convey the opulence of the design. And the numbers are staggering; Bjornson oversaw the work of seventy-nine contractors, who built the sets and costumes. One man and his entire family spent a summer making nothing but (perfect) curtain fringes. Meanwhile Bjornson, guided by an array of images suggested by Prince, kept track of the innumerable details, fitting them within a unified framework.

"Most directors in England," she says, presumably thinking of the likes of Jonathan Miller, Sir Peter Hall, and John Barton, "come through the universities. They approach theater through the written word. But Hal Prince has [illegible] visual sense; he is ex[illegible] in that way. He said one sentence to me that immediately became a springboard for the show. He said, 'I hear the thud of heavy drapes, and I see dark Turkish corners.' If you think about it, that's pretty much what the set is."

If ever a work of commercial theater has been defined and deepened by its design, *Phantom* is it. The novel of 1911 from which it derives is a second-rate romantic thriller in which people are constantly running around in mad fits of love and despair. Admittedly, the author, Gaston Leroux, did not write a literary masterpiece, but he did create some potent, archetypal imagery that has proved remarkably durable. His tale centers on Christine Daaé, a beautiful, orphaned soprano who sings and dances in the Paris Opera chorus. She is visited by the hideously deformed Phantom (genius–composer–architect–magician–killer–singing coach), who trains her to be a great singer, and soon she is in utter thrall to the mysterious masked Svengali, whom she follows in an ecstatic state to his realm beyond the looking glass. Christine is also loved by the dashing, rich, and boring Vicomte, whom she (of course) prefers. The Phantom will not let his protégée go without a fight, and he has several diabolical tricks up his too-short sleeve. (Bjornson tailored his suit slightly snug in the sleeves and legs, she says, to "draw attention to his hands and feet and give him a live-wire look.")

Phantom is widely perceived as another big-budget Lloyd Webber musical spectacular, à la *Starlight Express* or *Cats*. In fact, chandelier aside, most of its effects are achieved with great simplicity. When Christine sees the Phantom in her mirror (half-silvered—the Phantom is visible when lit from behind) and then follows him into it (an unseen stagehand slides it open), the audience gasps at the mystery and elegance of it. But, as Dana Kenn, one of Bjornson's assistants, points out, "It's a trick we could do in high-school drama."

Bjornson likes to stir an audience by vaguely suggesting that there is more to the story than can be physically seen. "Years ago I saw a Zeffirelli production of *Don Giovanni* at the Vienna opera house," she recalls. "The set seemed to exist beyond the frame of the stage. I understood then that a realistic set that is planted firmly in the boundary of what can be understood can have a deadening effect. If you make the audience feel as if there's something happening just offstage, they keep their eyes and ears open.

"In *Phantom*, I was quite keen on not showing our whole hand all of the time. Even within the proscenium I like to show

"The audience feels that something's happening just offstage."

only half of what's going on and leave the rest in darkness." Bjornson's taste for pregnant obscurity has its practical side. It facilitates set changes; gears can be kept moving constantly on what one of her assistants calls "flowing scenery." While the audience watches action on one half of the stage, another set—for Christine's dressing room or the managers' office, for instance—can be brought on and dressed behind a curtain on the other half of the stage. More to the poetic point, *Phantom* unfolds in two worlds: the glittering, public showcase of the Paris Opera, and the secluded underground den where the Phantom writes his opera and nurses his rage. Thematically, too, the musical is a web of opposites: goodness and evil; beauty and deformity; innocence and guilt; life and death. Appropriately, Bjornson is forever dividing things. The stage is cut in half by a curtain, or by light and darkness,

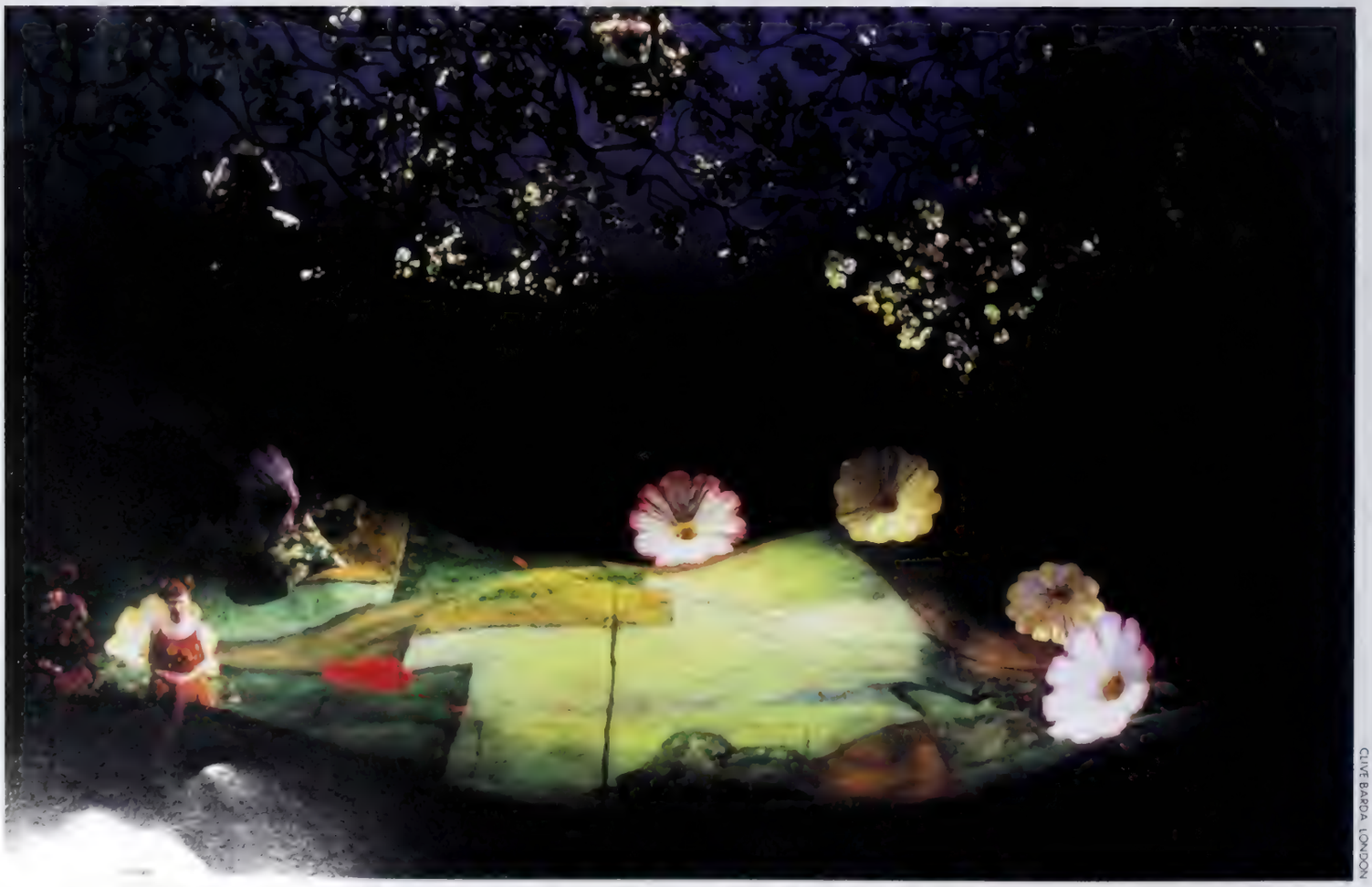
JOE COCKS STUDIO

In Bjornson's designs for *The Tempest*, when the ship sank, the sail flew up to form the sky.

just as the Phantom's mask covers half his face. Bjornson fortifies the play's themes in nonexplanatory, purely visual terms, and she bestows on *Phantom* a rich complexity, an inevitability that make it seem, at times, almost profound.

"A lot of people relate to *Phantom* in a mystical, almost a metaphysical way," says the director, Hal Prince. "Just recently I was introduced to a woman who told me that when she was a little girl she had had a very powerful dream. And in all of her adult life she had never once thought of that dream. But she told me, 'Last night I saw your show. That was my dream exactly.' Only a truly great designer would be able to elicit that kind of emotion."

Bjornson responds to the lush sexuality of the story with sets that seem to breathe the characters' desires. Christine's walk, for instance, from the safety of her dressing



CLIVE BARDA, LONDON

operas Bjornson has mounted in cooperation with the English National Opera.

"I like designs that touch the collective subconscious."

room to the Phantom's cellar reinvents with canny theatricality the rite of sexual initiation. As we know, Christine goes to the Phantom through her full-length mirror. As the set for her dressing room glides offstage, we see two actors (doubles for Christine and the Phantom) descend through a trapdoor on the stage. A moment later, against a black drop, we see the pair emerge at the top of a long catwalk spanning the upper back of the stage. As they begin to cross, the far end of the catwalk slowly descends. Christine hesitates, but the Phantom leads her forward. Before they reach the far end, the point where they started has begun to seesaw down, and they cross back over again, traversing the stage from top to bottom. Through this ingeniously simple device, Bjornson conjures up a long, winding passageway down to the level of the stage floor. The subterranean lake is engulfed by light fog, and a hundred flickering candles emerge slowly through tiny slats in the stage floor. Christine and the Phantom reappear in a gondola, which glides smoothly between the flames. When the candles have risen through the fog to their full height, we will be in the Phantom's lair, where (we hope) he will have his way with her.

Models for *Phantom*. At the start (below), the gilded figures of the proscenium are hidden.

"The sort of design I'm interested in—and I'm embarrassed because this sounds terribly pretentious—is the kind that touches a kind of collective subconscious," explains Bjornson. "There are three things that we share and whose symbols touch everyone's lives: the church, the theater, and the brothel. And certain objects that we might connect with these experiences—like candles, drapes, an organ, even smoke—we associate with ritual, and it makes things seem more important, more underlined, somehow. And then

Sketches for the masquerade in *The Phantom of the Opera*. Close observers may [illegible] of colorful revelers are mannequins.

there are even older symbols and associations that go back to ancient myths and stories. These are also part of our common vocabulary. *Phantom* touches on a lot of them: Beauty and the Beast, Leda and the Swan, Pandora's Box, stories of nymphs and satyrs. When Christine and the Phantom go down to his lair, I draw on many of these. First of all there's the water that surrounds them. Water is always used to represent sexuality, particularly a woman's sexual feelings. And candles, of course, are very male. So as they descend and they're enshrouded by all of this, I was trying for a feeling of ritual—that he was taking her as part of a ritual and there was nothing she could do about it. But I don't want the audience to think at all about any of this. I just want them to feel it."

Bjornson's great-grandfather on her father's side was Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, a statesman and man of letters who wrote Norway's national anthem and was known to his contemporaries as the "uncrowned king of Norway" and the "great bear of Norwegian letters." He died in 1910. About her own history, Bjornson is a bit vague. She was born in 1949 in Paris to a Norwegian father and a Romanian mother. "My parents' union had to do with war," she says. They separated when she was about one year old, and she moved to England with her mother. She will not say what happened to her father or whether or not she remains in touch with him.

Because her mother was a refugee and came to England without a husband, Bjornson was what is known as "stateless," and, partly because of her busy schedule, she remained so until shortly before *Phantom* opened in London. David Pountney believes that Bjornson's lack of roots helped feed her artistry. "Maria has suffered in her life, and, as a stateless person, she's spent much of her time in England as the classic insider-outsider. Because of it, she looks at things differently from most people—at an oblique angle."

As a child Bjornson did a lot of traveling with her mother, who frequently changed jobs. "She gave me a strong bias toward the arts," she says. "We were constantly going to museums and the cinema. Since I was an only child, I was alone a lot, and drawing became a way to occupy myself. I became an obsessive drawer at an early age."

"Obsessive" is a word many of Bjornson's colleagues use to describe her. "She never stops working. She's the definitive [illegible] Hands, the artis- [illegible] Royal Shakespeare [illegible] her to the

Expressing the core of a work as she intuits it: Bjornson's *Carmen* for the English National Opera

late artist and designer Boris Aronson. "She is constantly observing and putting her observations in a bank somewhere where she'll draw them out when she needs them. The great designers are worriers. She's never happy, or she is only for brief moments, and then she's always adjusting things again."

To the people who work for Bjornson, she can be intimidating, but she is always fair. Dana Kenn admits she is in awe of her boss. "She never loses her cool. I've seen her in so many situations where she could have gotten angry—things not delivered on time, or whatever, and she always stays calm. She has the most amazing eye. If a drop is a foot off or a border is unlevel, she sees it practically as she's walking in from the street. On the first run-through with the candles, we sat in the audience with her. She turned to us and said, 'There aren't enough candles.' We assured her they were all there. It turned out that sixteen were missing."

Jonathan Allen, a British assistant, says that, while Bjornson is demanding, she rewards him by remembering to include him in the creative process. "We were agonizing over how the Phantom's mask should look," he recalls. "I reminded her of a hat she had once worn to a fancy dress ball at the Lloyd Webbers' house. It covered one half of her face and one eye and crescendoed on the top of her head with a long feather. This became the basis for the mask she eventually designed. When she showed it to Hal, she remembered to say that I had reminded her of the hat."

Bjornson is always quick to acknowledge all such debts. "I get the best people, and I let them know I think they're the best, and they become as involved as I do," she says. "The biggest problem I have is underestimating the amount of time a show will take. If I don't leave myself enough time, I do bad work. I hate to do bad work, so I rarely have a lot of spare time. I envy eighteenth-century man—he had the leisure to master different skills. Today there's so much pressure involved in any one field that you must devote all of your time . . ." She trails off.

"To be the best?" I offer. She looks at me and seems distracted. For a moment I think she looks like Christine in *Phantom*—in the trance. "I never think of myself as the best," she answers finally. "I just think about doing the work." □

Laurie Winer is a free-lance writer with a special interest in theater. Her work appears frequently in the New York Times, *the* Wall Street Journal, *and other publications.*

OLD WOODWORKING TOOLS: A GOOD BUY FOR THE INFORMED

BY ROBIN DUTHY

Of all the relics of times past that enthrall collectors, woodworking tools are among the more surprising. After all, most people think that an ax is an ax, a plane is a plane, and that's that. Try making dinner conversation out of the fact that metallic planes displaced wooden ones in the nineteenth century, and you will discover the uneasy sensation of being a prime bore.

Tool buffs, like great artists, are born, not made. If your soul does not respond to woodworking tools, there is not a lot you can do about it. You can listen politely while a tool buff explains how the ax was refined and modified over 10,000 years. You can look at axes used in medieval wars, executioners' axes, axes that felled timbers for the first American homesteads. Then you can look at a nineteenth-century catalog listing forty-seven different axes for use by mast makers, coopers, and practitioners of other dimly remembered trades. And you can see in the latest mail-order catalog Yankee double-bitted axes like the double-headed axes used by the Minoans and the Romans. If this leaves you cold, chances are you will not warm to the history of the screwdriver either.

However hard it is to believe, to love saws and monkey wrenches is okay. Important, brainy persons have been hooked on tools. Leonardo da Vinci made a planing machine and came up with improvements to the lathe. The elector of Saxony had special tools made for his own use. So did Louis XVI of France, the diarist Samuel Pepys, and many others. From the eighteenth century onwards, smaller and finer versions of craftsmen's tools were made for the "gentlemen's" market.

Apart from an [illegible] sentimental interest in [illegible] the color and pat[illegible] [illegible] tools can [illegible] and dusty. The [illegible]

A rough beauty: a gauge ripping plane, ca. 1885.

bronze, copper, steel, ranging in color from silver to reddish-yellow to green—and the walnut, boxwood, ebony, and other beautiful hardwoods their makers often used provided a palette many artists would be happy to work with today. Serious collectors usually display their rare and beautiful finds in their homes or lend them to museums.

Though, compared with painting, functional things like furniture and ceramics will always be seen as inferior art forms, to judge by saleroom prices the gap is closing. People are more willing to see artistry where it was not recognized before. But interest in old woodworking tools will be affected in another way. The more people see that the goods they buy are made by robots and their lives organized by computers, the more strongly do they feel the urge to retain control, to be independent. The humble woodworking tool is an obvious beneficiary of this process and demand is sure to grow. Some of today's deskbound collectors indulge fantasies of fending for themselves in a state of nature for a few hundred dollars; but the market is only marginally dependent on them. Roughly, 80 percent of all old tools sold end up with amateur or professional craftsmen. For them, as for the pure collector, there is one simple and compelling reason for buying. In nearly every case it is possible to get a tool of better quality—regardless of the possible artistic value—than anything available today, and usually for less money.

This provides a bulletproof argument for buying. Or so it might seem. Yet, invariably, when toolbuffs return with, say, a rosewood tenon saw bought for half the price of the modern equivalent, they announce a plan to use the tool on some project, but *they don't say when*. A tool that is never used cannot convincingly be described as a money saver.

In practice, today's collectors have to go for tools of the eighteenth century or later. Seventeenth-century material is rarely on the market, and most surviving tools from earlier periods are in museums.

This carpenter's tool chest, made in the mid-1870s, is now worth $4,000.

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Ninety percent of all tools collected today are variations on the ax, the plane, the saw, the chisel, and the auger. Of these the commonest is the plane. It evolved from the adze, which in turn evolved from the ax. An adze is basically an ax whose head has been turned 90 degrees so that it can be used for trimming timbers, the user standing astride the horizontal timber. We know from tomb paintings that that is what the Egyptians used. If they wanted a smoother finish, they rubbed wood with stone blocks and used sand as an abrasive. It was the Romans who enclosed the blade of the adze in a metal casing to form a kind of plane that Pliny the Elder described at the beginning of the Christian era.

Some of the earliest collectible planes are the decorated and dated Dutch ones of the eighteenth century. These now command $500 to $1,000, but one must be sure that the carving was done when the plane was made and has not been faked since. This sort of knavery apart, the old-tool market is notably free of the malpractices that worry buyers in many other fields.

During the eighteenth century—the golden age of woodwork—when the moldings of all doors, windows, and mantelpieces were worked by hand, molding planes were made in the thousands, and many survive today. For that reason they are not expensive, ranging from $6 to $40 according to condition and the rarity of the profile they cut. A plane made to produce a Grecian ogee, for instance, unusual but not rare, would probably fetch about $25.

Form follows function: a bronze scraper plane, 1855.

W. L. Goodman's listing of English plane makers was published in 1968, and tool buffs can often be seen peering at the black grime on the nose of an old plane for signs of a maker's mark that would help to establish its value. Exceptional planes were made by the Scottish firm of Spiers from 1840 to 1920 and by the London firm of Norris from 1873 to 1941. Unusual examples can fetch up to $3,000. The great American metal-plane-making industry arose in the nineteenth century, starting with Hazard Knowles, who in 1827 took out a patent for a metal plane with a cast-iron sole. Before that, wooden planes—especially those by the Wrentham, Massachusetts, maker Francis Nicholson—have become avidly sought. They go for as much as $3,500.

In the century following Knowles's patent, 600 patents were taken out on planes with every conceivable modification. The leading name in the field was Stanley, and that company's entire range is keenly collected today. Just as gun collectors will pay an extra thousand dollars or so for a rare Colt or Remington with an unusual rivet, so plane collectors will give an extra few hundred for a rare model, such as the Stanley Victor Rabbet 11½ plane of the 1880s, now listed in John Walter's *Stanley Planes 1988 Price Guide* at $1,500 to $3,000. Driven by popular demand, prices for the most expensive planes peaked three years ago but should climb back soon. Prices for early British and American beech-wood molding planes are already edging up.

The brace, now largely replaced by hand and electric drills, came in during the fifteenth century. The most collectible today are the ebony or boxwood Ultimatum Framed Braces, made by William Marples of Sheffield, England, in the 1850s and known as Ultimatums. Prices for some of these reached $2,500 in 1980 but have now dropped to around $1,500. Though Christie's published a guide to old woodworking tools four years ago, this collecting field is still young, and buyers are feeling their way on questions of rarity. A few high prices for braces at auction can quickly call similar examples onto the market. When that happens, collectors start to worry that these fine brass-mounted braces were commoner than they had thought, so they stand off while the market settles. There is a place for the brace in the present-day woodworker's chest, and old, plain, high-quality examples can be bought for $60, as against $80 for the modern metal equivalent.

Small copper saws were used in Egypt from 1500 B.C. Their teeth pointed toward the tang, and the worker used a pulling action so that the soft blades would not buckle. A few examples have survived from later centuries, but nothing very early is likely to come on the market. In this field, the American Disston saws made from 1870 to 1939 are the most desirable for collectors as well as craftsmen. A good 1930s example can still be had for $75, compared with $40 for the comparable but

Bailey's Victor no. 11, ca. 1883: a good plane, but frog piece too thin.

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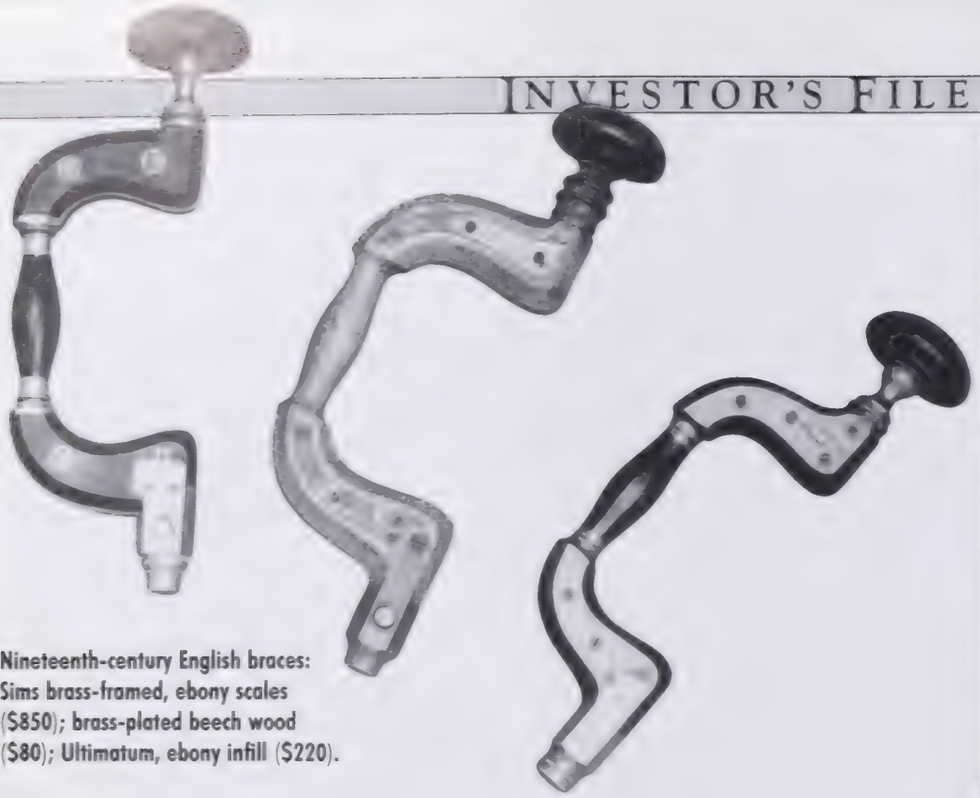

Nineteenth-century English braces: Sims brass-framed, ebony scales ($850); brass-plated beech wood ($80); Ultimatum, ebony infill ($220).

inferior Disston saw made today. Whether you buy as collector or user, always reject a saw blade that is pockmarked by rust. In use it will bind in the wood; in a collection it will downgrade the overall impression.

Tools with good edges are getting scarce. After long use, chisels and gouges are eventually worn away to a stump and discarded. Yet even here, boxwood- or rosewood-handled chisels with hard steel edges laminated to a wrought-iron backing, dating from early in this century, can still be bought for $15 to $25, compared with the modern, easily chipped blade set in an epoxy-resin handle at $15. The best modern Japanese steel is on a level with nineteenth-century American and British steels but costs even more.

Special sets of twelve, twenty-four, or thirty-six ladies' carving tools with hardwood handles were still being sold in mahogany boxes in London in the 1920s. The set of thirty-six then cost $21 and would today be worth $500.

Top performers in the old-tool market have been the ornamental wood-turning lathes made mainly by Holtzapffel and other London firms, such as Joseph Fenn and Gill, between 1800 and 1900. That period saw a craze for the virtuoso carving of ebony and ivory for its own sake—a hobby that is enjoying a minor revival today. The lathes themselves were of astonishing quality, and so too were the complicated chucks and ancillary equipment that allowed the carver to create ellipses, ovals, and other off-center patterns. These were the machines that could produce that most baffling object the Chinese ball, made up of concentric hollow spheres that rotate one inside the other. A Holtzapffel lathe and full set of accessories that sold in London in 1975 for $4,000 might now be expected to fetch $30,000 to $40,000.

meter: something to get excited about.

As in all collecting fields, the top slice of the market has climbed faster than the mainstream, where average growth may be 3 to 5 percent a year. But even if run-of-the-mill old tools do no more than hold their value, that will be more than can be said of their modern counterparts. There are quite a few full-time dealers in old woodworking tools in the United States and plenty more who trade in tools and bric-a-brac at flea markets. They deprecate the quality of most of the tools made today. The often-cited "Gresham's law" about bad money driving good money out of circulation may be true of currencies, but in the market for old woodworking tools the proliferation of the bad is driving up the value of the good. □

WHAT THEY COST TODAY

Maker	Tool	Price Range
Robert Wood-ing, London (working 1710–28)	Molding Plane	$750–$1,500
Francis Nichol-son, U.S.A. (working 1704–53)	Molding Plane	$800–$3,500
Christopher Gabriel, London (working 1770–95)	Molding Plane	$80–$150
Alex Mathie-son, Scotland (working 1822–51)	Screw-Stem Plow Plane	$160–$270
Spiers of Ayr, Scotland	Shoulder Plane	$110–$160
Norris of London	Adjustable Smoothing Plane	$270–$750
Stanley, New Britain, Con-necticut	Dovetail Plane	$500–$800
Disston, Phila-delphia	Dovetail Saw	$20–$40
E.C. Atkins, Indianapolis	Panel Saw	$30–$50
Spear and Jackson, Shef-field, England	Rip Saw	$35–$50
William Mar-ples, Sheffield	Ebony Ulti-matum Brace	$300–$500
James Howarth, Sheffield	Beech Brass-Plated Brace	$100–$150

Robin Duthy is the author of The Successful Investor.

"mardi gras"

By

PAUL D. WEGNER

Photograph by Steve Arrow

LONDON/ROME/NEW YORK

INTERNATIONAL ARTIST'S GROUP, INC.

BRIEFING PAPER

COMPUTERS TO GO

BY
JOHN WORAM

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MICK WIGGINS

Computerphobes, beware! The personal computer is free from the tether of the power cord and apt to show up just about anywhere. There is no longer any escape. The machine that once needed a room the size of a basketball court may now take up less space than the basketball itself.

Although the smallest PCs are not yet in the Walkman category, "Lapman" might not be an inappropriate term for some of them. And in fact, "laptop computing" rather accurately describes what the latest hardware permits the user to do. This Briefing Paper takes a quick look at just a few of the laptops and portables (not always synonymous) that are now available. Some, but by no means all, come with [illegible] These allow [illegible] out plugging [illegible] under [illegible] er [illegible]

chines with lots of features drink lots of current and do not go for long on one set of batteries. The lighter-weight devices need less power, so batteries will last significantly longer.

What to look for

First, a little clarification of terminology. A portable is simply a PC designed to be transported with minimum lower-back pain. Anyone in reasonable health should be able to carry one to a waiting car; however, the portable is not intended for use *while* one is traveling.

By contrast, the laptop is—or should be—a traveling computer. It fits comfortably in one's lap, allowing—even encouraging—a little computing while one is on the move. However, the term now applies to just about anything with a handle on it. So, lift it (if you can) before buying it.

The well-executed laptop is not unlike the well-seasoned traveler: both leave the excess baggage at home. For example, it may make a lot of sense to leave diskettes and drives behind and simply take along a laptop with a built-in modem (the interface device between your computer and a phone line). Whenever you get the chance, have your LT phone home and upload whatever you have written to a larger, and presumably desk-bound, machine.

If your own desk does not yet groan under the weight of one of these, you can leave an electronic message to yourself at one of the electronic communications centers, such as CompuServe or MCI Mail, and download your own messages (again via modem) when you return. Now you will need that disk drive to store them, but at least you did not have to carry it across the country with you.

Getting started

For a crash course in laptop computing, it

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would be hard to beat a visit to the local Radio Shack outlet. The Shack's parent company, Tandy Corporation, markets an excellent line of laptops, from modest to fully loaded. Here is a brief look at both ends of the line.

The Tandy 102 ($499) is the latest version of a very popular entry-level laptop. It weighs in at 3 pounds, takes up less lap space than a ream of loose-leaf paper, and shows 8 lines of 40 characters each on its LCD screen. There are certainly more glamorous laptops around, some in fact from Tandy itself, but the lowly little 102 is perhaps what laptopping is really all about. If not quite the machine to manage the spread sheets of a Fortune-500 company, it should be more than enough to keep the frequent traveler occupied during a cross-country flight. Standard configuration features a built-in modem and 24K to 32K of RAM (random-access memory, measured in K, or 1,024, bytes). An external diskette drive ($199.95) weighs 1¾ pounds and requires four AA batteries or an AC adapter (not included). Perhaps a bit awkward to juggle while one is on the road, the drive might best be left in the hotel room for use at the end of the day.

The flagship of the Tandy fleet is the model 1400 LT ($1,599). On several counts (and at 13.5 pounds) the 1400 LT is no lightweight. It packs 768K of RAM and two 3½-inch diskette drives and displays 25 lines of 80 characters each—the standard display configuration of most deskbound PCs. The 1400's rechargeable battery is good for about four hours; since that is not enough for a cross-country flight on one battery charge, those diskette drives come in handy for storing data on the fly. The modem for the 1400 is an optional, plug-in extra ($199.95). Apparently the 1400 has found favor with power users; earlier this year Tandy warned volume purchasers that it might take some three months for them to reach the top of its [illegible] is one month.

[illegible] of [illegible] Z-183 Portable PC as the road machine of choice. The magazine's editors especially liked its "lush, dazzling, true-aspect, full-size screen," which "puts the others to shame." But that was last year. Today it is the TurbosPort 386 ($7,999; $8,499 with an internal modem). Standard features include 2M bytes (M equals roughly one *million*) of RAM, a 40M-byte hard disk, one 3½-inch diskette drive, plus serial and parallel ports (for external modem and printer operation). As if that were not enough, the "page white" (black letters on white background) display is even better than on last year's model.

To help prolong battery life, Zenith has devised a power-management system: a combination of manual and automatic switching that routes power to only those components that need it.

The TurbosPort 386 weighs 14.7 pounds, or 18 pounds with the battery in place. No laptop this, its strength is really as a portable; use it in the office and then take it home at night if you have not had enough computing for one day. In that context it really shines, almost literally. In fact, its screen has been called "the best display to date on a portable computer."

Weighing in at 14.6 pounds, Toshiba's T5100 ($7,499) almost matches the TurbosPort in heft and matches it in storage capacity with a 40M-byte hard disk. The standard configuration offers 2M bytes of RAM, a 1.44M-byte diskette drive, serial and parallel ports, and an auxiliary monitor output for driving an optional external color display. Battery powering is not available in this model.

Still another *PC* magazine "Best of" award went to Toshiba for its T1000 laptop ($1,199), cited as "the answer to full-featured portables that are just too heavy to be comfortably lugged around, and machines that give up some functionality for their lighter weight and smaller size." The T1000 weighs 6.4 pounds, contains 512K of RAM, and has one 3½-inch diskette drive. That makes it, on the one hand, light enough to carry around and, on the other, "heavy" enough to get some real work done. The reviewer Philip F.H. Rose, usually no fan of laptops, calls it "the closest thing yet to the perfect laptop."

No discussion of personal computers, laptop or otherwise, would be complete without a look at IBM. The company's "PC Convertible" was introduced in mid-1986, to generally mixed reviews. It weighed almost 13 pounds at birth and quickly put on 7 more if all the various options, including a printer(!), were added.

By the summer of 1987, IBM was up to PC Convertible model 3. The basic system ($1,695) now contains 256K RAM, two 3½-inch diskette drives, and a blue-on-white backlit display of 25 lines of 80 characters each. A modem is available as an optional extra ($450). The display is quite clear, though squashed; it is only 3½ inches high.

Perhaps the Convertible's best feature is its instant-resume capability: the user may turn off the machine without bothering to save data first. This is convenient for on-again–off-again computing, as when one is traveling. Given a bit of bumpy weather, in-flight dinner service, or the final approach, the Convertible may be quickly stowed without the bother of a lengthy data-save ritual. The Convertible's weight of 13 pounds may discourage you from lugging it along, but its ten-hour battery life may come in handy if the plane is late.

The Datavue Snap 1 + 1 consists of modules that can be assembled into various configurations to suit just about any requirement. The front module supplies the computer's microprocessor, display, and keyboard. The rear module contains

(Continued on page 162)

DIANA KAN

Diana Kan's recognition and acclaim is worldwide. With over 40 one-woman shows held on four continents, and numerous international awards to her credit, she is an artist whose work knows no cultural boundaries. Her work is housed in many museums and both private and corporate collections all over the world.

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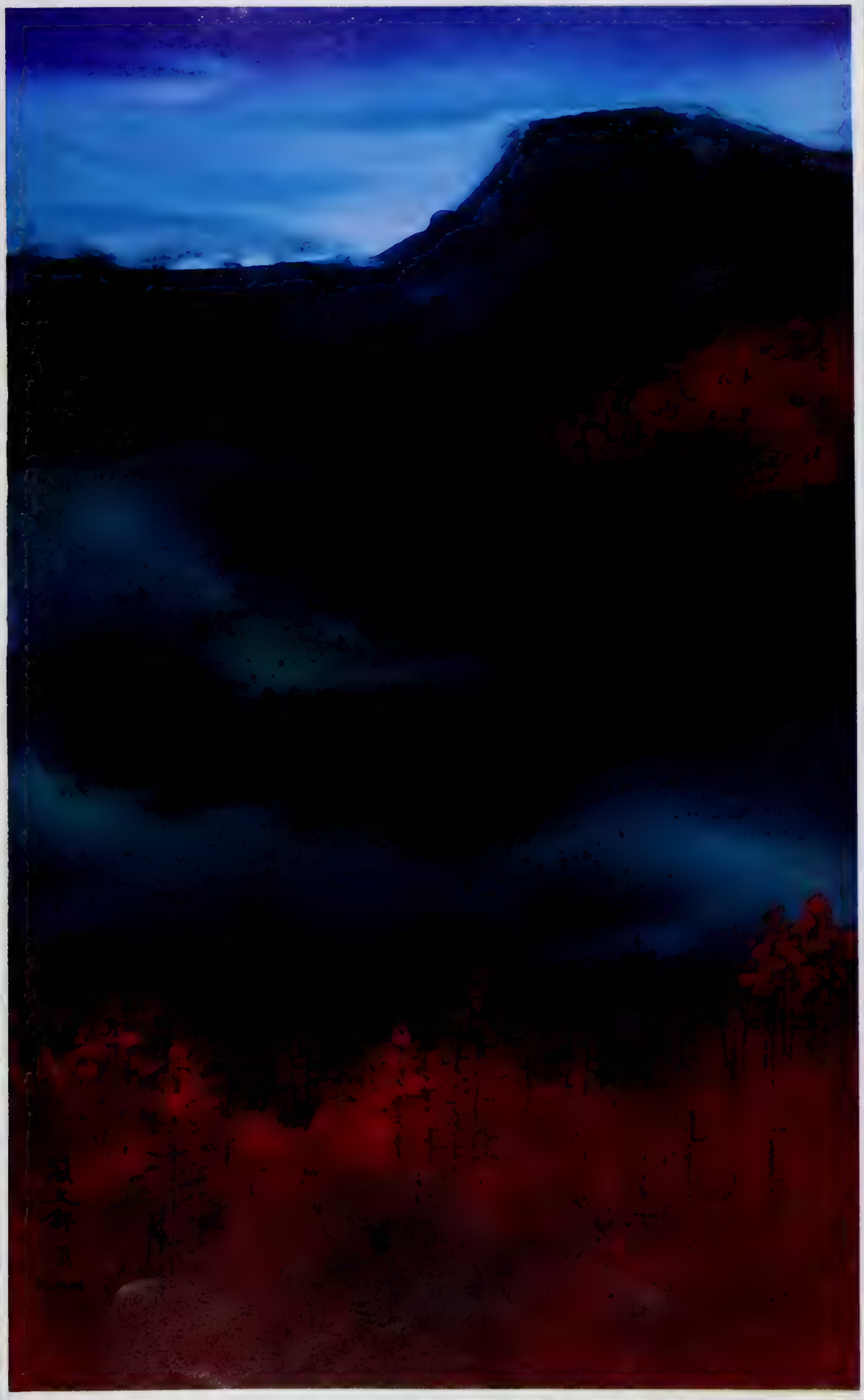

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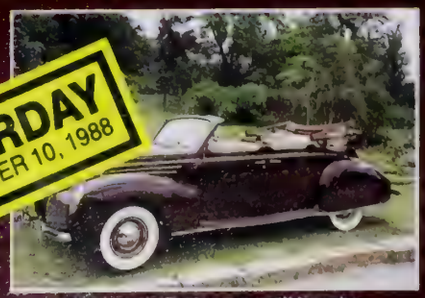

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(Continued from page 160)
diskette drives and 640K RAM. A modem will fit in either the front or the rear module. With all the bells and whistles installed, the 1 + 1 can cost almost $5,000. If you know exactly what you need and your requirements do not change from one trip to another, you can spend less elsewhere with a fixed-configuration system. However, the Snap 1 + 1's mix-and-match capabilities justify the premium price for those who need flexibility.

The NEC MultiSpeed is another highly regarded laptop and has received special notice for its excellent keyboard and a display that is almost up to Zenith (that name again) standards. The NEC MultiSpeed EL model 2 ($2,295) features 640K RAM and two 3½-inch drives and weighs about 12 pounds. Add $399 for the modem.

PUTTING A LAPTOP IN YOUR POCKET

An adequate description of the Psion Organiser II would take up more space than the Organiser itself. Superficially resembling a vest-pocket-size programmable calculator, the Organiser is just your basic 9-ounce combination personal computer, calculator, diary, note pad, alarm clock, and file cabinet.

Across the top of the device is a two-line display with 16 characters per line. Turn the Organiser on, and the display prompts you to select one of several functions. The diary, for example, begins with a display of the current month, today's date, day of the week, and the time at the next half-hour point. To help yourself remember an appointment three months from now, just toggle ahead until the proper month shows up on the display. Then select the date and time, and store a 64-character message of what was so important about the big meeting. Next, you may set an alarm that will beep at you discreetly three months from now. If the Organiser is switched off at the crucial moment, it automatically turns itself on and displays your message (in case you have forgotten).

The "save" function is the entry point to your own miniaturized record file. A record consists of up to 255 characters, and the number of records depends on the Organiser's memory capacity. Its internal memory will hold about 32,000 characters, while two plug-in "Datapaks" hold up to 128,000 characters each. A record might consist of a client's name, address, and phone number, checks written, inventory data, recipes, or some of each plus whatever else you can dream up. By the way, the plug-in Datapaks do not lose their memory, or your records, when removed from the Organiser.

The beauty is that you can find any record later on, long after you have forgotten where it is, simply by entering a fragment that comes to mind. For example, if you recall filing something under "Fred somebody," or that whoever-it-is has a 415 area code, try "find Fred" or "find 415," which will display every record that contains that fragment, allowing you to get to the right one quickly.

And that is only the beginning. The Organiser contains a built-in BASIC-like programming language and a full-blown programmable calculator too. And then there are the accessories.

The Comms Link ($99.99) connects the Organiser to a personal computer (for transferring information back and forth) or to a modem while you are on the road. One writer we know has grown so used to the Psion that he is composing his next novel on it. The Travel-Pak ($89.99) and Travel-Pak Plus ($129.99) add all sorts of goodies. The language-translation feature (on T-P Plus only) offers a 20,000-word vocabulary in English, French, German, Italian, and Spanish. Select any two of these and then enter a word or phrase. The original and translated versions appear on separate lines of the display.

Other Travel-Pak features, shared by both models, include international-dialing assistance; conversions of metric, U.S., and imperial units, clothing sizes, and currency exchanges; and time zones. There is a password-protected section reserved for personal information, such as passport and driver's-license numbers or any other data that might be needed in an emergency. Additional accessories include a plug-in Oxford spelling checker or word processor (each $49.99), or a spread sheet ($79.99) compatible with Lotus 1-2-3.

All of the above is battery-operated by a single 9-volt cell, which seems to last forever. About the only thing that does not add up on the Psion Organiser is its price: $250 retail for the top-of-the-line model described here. It's an outright steal.

For further information contact Psion Inc., 320 Sylvan Lake Road, Watertown, CT 06779, (203) 548-4335, (203) 274-7521

Communicating with home base

All this talk of modems brings up an important question. How do you get the modem to work in your hotel room? Until quite recently, the laptopper had to bring along his own phone-tapping equipment in order to work. Here, "tapping" is nothing more sinister than figuring out how to send computer data back to the home office at the overly high hotel rate for a phone call. That is more than many potential laptoppers care to contend with.

Given all the high-tech phones now on the market, and the number of guests showing up with computers, hotels are beginning to make the necessary adjustments. At the Hyatt chain, for example, all new and renovated rooms are being made PC-compatible. Right now, twenty-eight Hyatt properties provide two phone lines per room, and seventeen others are adding second lines. A random check of several other hotel systems suggests that Hyatt may indeed be the place to take your portable; of the handful of major hotels called, only Hyatt could answer our questions about modem use. So, do a little checking up before checking in. □

Directory of Products Mentioned

Datavue Snap 1 + 1. Datavue Corp., One Meca Way, Norcross, GA 30093; (404) 564-5555. **IBM Convertible, Model 3.** IBM Corp., 100 Summit Avenue, Montvale, NJ 07645; (800) 447-0890. **NEC MultiSpeed.** NEC Home Electronics (USA) Inc., Computer Products Division, 1255 Michael Drive, Wood Dale, IL 60191-1094; (312) 860-9500. **Tandy 102 Laptop Computer, Tandy 1400 LT Portable Computer.** Tandy Corporation/Radio Shack, 1800 One Tandy Center, Fort Worth, TX 76102; (817) 390-3011. **Toshiba T1000, Toshiba T5100.** Toshiba America, Inc., Information Systems Division, 9740 Irvine Boulevard, Irvine, CA 92718; (714) 583-3000. **Zenith TurbosPort 386 Portable Personal Computer.** Zenith Electronics Corp., 1000 Milwaukee Avenue, Glenview, IL 60025-2493; (312) 391-7000.

Other Contacts

CompuServe Information Service. 5000 Arlington Centre Boulevard, P. O. Box 20212, Columbus, OH 43220; (800) 848-8199, (614) 457-0802. **Hyatt Hotels Corporation.** Madison Plaza, 200 West Madison, Chicago, IL 60606; (312) 750-1234. **MCI Mail.** 1150 Seventeenth Street NW, Suite 800, Washington, DC 20036; (800) 444-6245, (202) 833-8484.

John Woram reported last month on the Consumer Electronics Show.

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A CENTURY AND A HALF OF CHRISTOFLE SILVER

BY LEON HARRIS

When a family company reaches a certain age and achieves a certain importance, the family usually wants one thing: commemoration. The best monument, at least nowadays, is a museum. And so it is that the proud French firm of Christofle, silversmith and goldsmith to European nobility since 1830, has opened a museum, at 12 Rue Royale in Paris. Its exhibits are the masterworks that Christofle has turned out over the past century and a half. For the record, the company was responsible for such marvels as the bronze work on Pope Pius IX's private railway car; the gold-plated hardware and fireplaces for the private apartments of the empress Eugénie in the Tuileries; the bronze and galvanized cast-iron figures for the façade of Charles Garnier's opera house in Paris, as well as Carrier-Belleuse's caryatids for the grand staircase; and the thirty-two-feet-tall Madonna and Child for the church of Nôtre-Dame-de-la-Garde in Marseilles.

As is often the case with museums, this one provides some fascinating insights into the political, social, and artistic history of France. From Shakespeare's day until our own, agriculture has been France's principal source of wealth. This basic fact of French history is handsomely reflected in the museum by the striking trophies that Christofle made, beginning about 1860, to be presented in every *département* to the best breeder of pigs, cattle, goats, and sheep.

Leon Harris, who collects silver, is a frequent contributor to this magazine.

DANIEL BOUDINET (2)

Reproduction of the Hildesheim krater, 1869.

The museum similarly demonstrates that every force that influenced French artists also influenced Christofle. The same Japanese elements obvious in the work of Toulouse-Lautrec affected Christofle's silver, as did the art nouveau of 1900 and the art deco of 1925. It could scarcely be otherwise when the artists of each period, from Jean-Baptiste Carpaux to Gallé, designed for Christofle.

In 1830, at the age of twenty-four, Charles Christofle, the son of a Lyons silk merchant, went into business with his brother-in-law, the Paris jeweler and goldsmith Joseph-Albert Bouilhet. To strengthen further this alliance, Charles married Bouilhet's sixteen-year-old daughter, Émilie. Charles had the vision to buy exclusive patent rights to the new electroplating methods soon after they were invented, around 1836; and from the 1840s until his death, in 1863, he filed 358 lawsuits defending these enormously valuable rights, which were to make him and his heirs millionaires.

It was not long before royalty discovered Christofle. In 1844, King Louis-Philippe visited Christofle's factory and gave him the royal warrant. Emperor Napoleon III and the fashion-frantic Empress Eugénie ordered an 800,000-franc official silver service. Their puppet Maximilian of Hapsburg, who was briefly emperor of Mexico, ordered a service of 4,983 pieces for the palace of Chapultepec. At Paris's Universal Exposition of 1867, Sultan Abdul-Aziz of Turkey ordered special silver furniture to his Oriental taste.

Even more than the royals and nobles, it was the members of the burgeoning bourgeoisie, created by the Industrial Revolution, who made Christofle's fortunes. The nouveaux riches outdid one another with the *hôtels particuliers*—as grand as the mansions of the Fricks, Goulds, and Vanderbilts in America—that they built or took over from the declining nobility.

The dining room, which came into being in the midseventeenth century, now provided a great opportunity for an ostentatious display of what Veblen would later call "conspicuous consumption"—and all the better if it was absolutely filled with silver planters, platters and enormous *(Continued on page 167)*

"Invitation to Drink," a tea fountain three feet high, containing enough refreshing Darjeeling to satisfy 250 teetotalers.

Albert and Henri Bouilhet with their late father.

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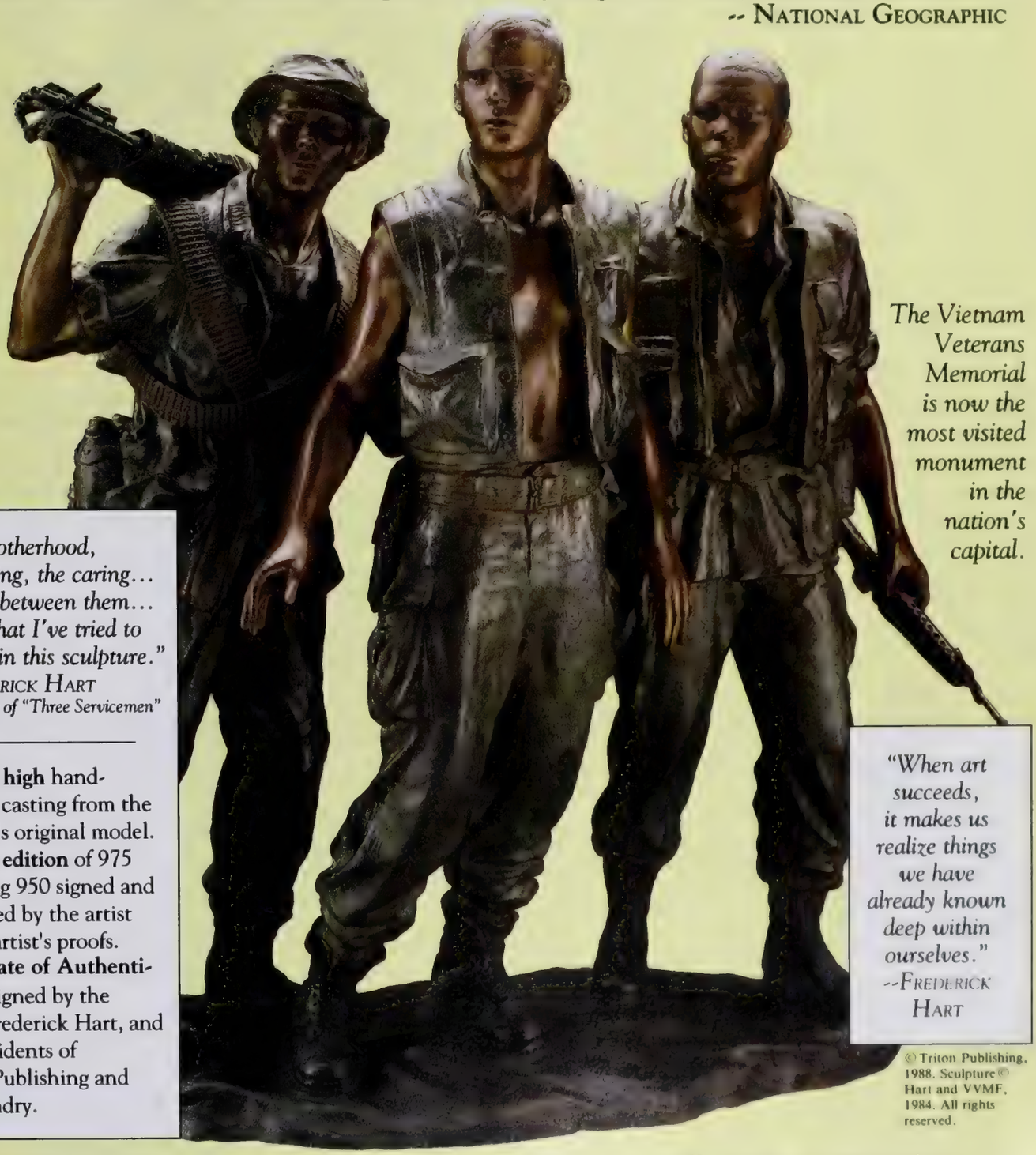

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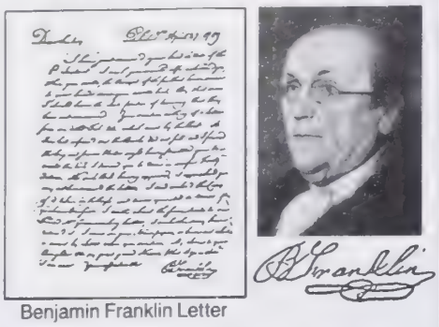

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(Continued from page 164)
sculptured tea services, saltcellars and chandeliers. Socially prominent women of the period were "at home" on certain weekdays, receiving as guests not only other *bourgeoises* but also painters, sculptors, performing artists, and even writers. Each salon competed with the others for the best china, silver, and decoration, as well as for guests.

The most sumptuous and symbolic members of this parvenu plutocracy were the *grandes horizontales*, those high-priced courtesans whom Alexandre Dumas *fils* immortalized in *La Dame aux Camélias*. The fictional heroine was a little too good to be true. A genuine courtesan, Thérèse Lachmann, was far more interesting. A Russian-born Polish Jewess, she deployed her widely enjoyed talents to propel herself from modest, ghetto beginnings to fortune and fame as the marquise de Païva. She built the most luxurious *hôtel particulier* in Paris, with an onyx-lined grand staircase, at 25 Champs-Élysées (now the Traveller's Club). Wagner and Gautier, Renan, Sainte-Beuve, and the Goncourt brothers came to see her there; and she received her most generous benefactors, the duc de Gramont, the duc de Guiche, and Count Henckel von Donnersmarck (Bismarck's fabulously rich cousin, who eventually made her his countess), in the onyx bathtub of her onyx-lined bathroom.

KOLLAR/COURTESY CHRISTOFLE ARCHIVE (3)

Carrot vase with polychrome patina, ca. 1880.

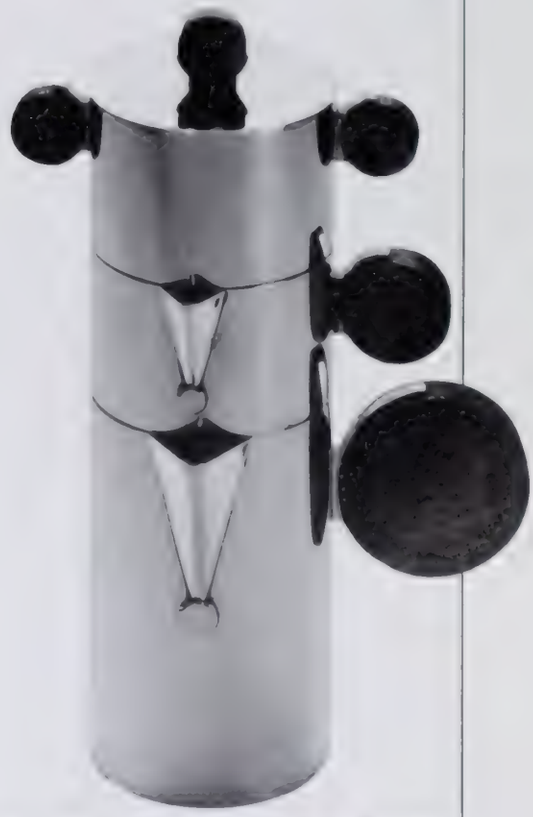
Art deco box with bronze patina, ca. 1925.

A vermeil bidet, regally engraved with her monogram, is among the objects that Christofle made for the marquise that are on display in the new museum. According to Albert Bouilhet, the handsome, tall, fifth-generation president of Christofle, of all the extraordinary things his firm has ever created, the most kitschy, the most vulgar, the best expression of the Belle Époque is a bed that Christofle built in 1878 for a maharaja. Christofle used 639 pounds of silver to make this enormous bed, with its four life-size women serving as bedposts. The silver nudes were painted flesh color, and Lepage, the famous Paris hairdresser of the period, made a wig for each of them. Their arms waved ostrich-feather fans over the bed's occupants, who were serenaded by a music box under the mattress. "I have been to India to try to buy back the bed for our new museum," Bouilhet reports, "but no luck so far."

The maharaja's bed is presumably the ultimate expression of the motto of the Union Centrale des Arts Décoratifs, "The beautiful in the useful." Unlike Americans, the French do not attempt to draw the silly and snobbish line between decorative art and fine art, the latter considered to be sublime and the former merely secondary. The journal of the Universal Exposition of 1867 decreed quite seriously, "If Benvenuto Cellini [illegible] the artist would become [illegible]

"We have always been as proud of the silver we design for institutions as of that for rich or royal individuals," says Bouilhet. To prove his point, he lists the serving pieces and flatware Christofle designed for the Compagnie Internationale des Wagons-Lits and for the Orient Express in 1870; the "Orchidée" pattern it made for Maxime Gaillard's restaurant, Maxim's, in the 1890s and the decorations it did with the art nouveau artist Mucha for Fouquet's jewelry store; the flatware services Christofle still makes for Paris's grand hotels, the Ritz, the Meurice, and the Crillon among them; the thousands of pieces the firm made in 1935 for the transatlantic liner *Normandie*. "These pieces are just as significant for our firm, and for this museum, as a toilet set we made for the czar of the Russias in 1891," he says.

Albert's brother, Henri Bouilhet, an architect and decorator who studied at the École des Beaux-Arts, designed the Christofle museum and serves as its codirector. (Henri was also the principal designer of the interior spaces of the Centre Pompidou, in Paris.) When a visitor to the museum asks the names of some recent Christofle clients, Albert Bouilhet suggests the shah of Iran, the emperor of Ethiopia, the duke of Windsor, and Princess Grace of Monaco. When the visitor observes that since all of these personages have gone on to heavenly thrones and this



Well stacked: coffee, cream, and sugar, ca. 1925.

Silver-plated teapot, ca. 1880, *à la japonaise.*

makes Christofle appear as if it carries a deadly curse, like that of King Tut's tomb, Bouilhet quickly adds the present kings of Morocco, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia.

No longer does Christofle control the silverplating patents or the silverplating business. "If we are still the best in the world," Bouilhet says, "the chief reasons are quality and design." Christofle flatware, sold at the firm's own stores and at such U.S. outlets as Gump's, Bloomingdale's, Bullock's, and Neiman Marcus, contains forty-two microns of silver. According to Bouilhet, "Most manufacturers of silverware use only a fraction of that. The base metal that Christofle uses contains 50 percent more nickel than the base metal used by other manufacturers. Of

Silver sugar spoon, ca. 1900, trying hard to resemble an art nouveau flower.

course, when a client wants flatware as cheap as possible, we supply that too, such as breakfast services for hotels, with only ten microns of silver."

Why would a hotel want to use cheaper silver for breakfast than for lunch or dinner? Breakfast is often served in the room, Bouilhet explains, and guests usually have breakfast before checking out—often taking the breakfast silver with them.

Another way that Christofle maintains its reputation is by making things no one else does. "If you look at the duck presses and big meat trolleys in fine restaurants around the world, you'll see they're Christofle," Bouilhet says.

When the visitor asks Bouilhet why more and more Americans are buying his silverplated flatware, sometimes at prices equal to or even higher than those for sterling silver, he replies, "Primarily, it is our sense of style and our quality that account for our success in America. We say we produce French *couture pour la table,* so there is an element of snobbery. Our customers want a pattern that isn't used by everyone else they know. But I would be egotistical and ungrateful if I did not also acknowledge the contribution to our success made by American silver manufacturers and their retailers through their untruthful advertising of almost nonstop cut-price sales. Offering merchandise at half price when it is almost never sold at the so-called regular price does not fool the public. It only ensures that no one will buy except on sale. This practice is what has given the American public confidence in Christofle, Buccellati, Puiforcat, and Georg Jensen, because we have only one price and are never on so-called sale."

Design, Bouilhet says, is the most important factor in determining whether a company such as Christofle flourishes or atrophies. A look around the museum shows just how well Christofle has managed to excite people of taste throughout Europe for the past century and a half.

Bouilhet says that design is still Christofle's major priority. Recently the company organized a contest for new flatware designs, offering a first prize of $10,000. Bouilhet expected a few hundred entries and received more than 7,000. This, says Bouilhet, is the telling point about the importance of design. Christofle began to manufacture the winning design, submitted by Bernard Yot and called "Aria," and in less than two years it became the firm's best-selling pattern worldwide, accounting for a quarter of total flatware sales.

"So, as we look at this museum, which, like all museums, is a tribute to the past," Bouilhet says, "we think we may have a future as well." □

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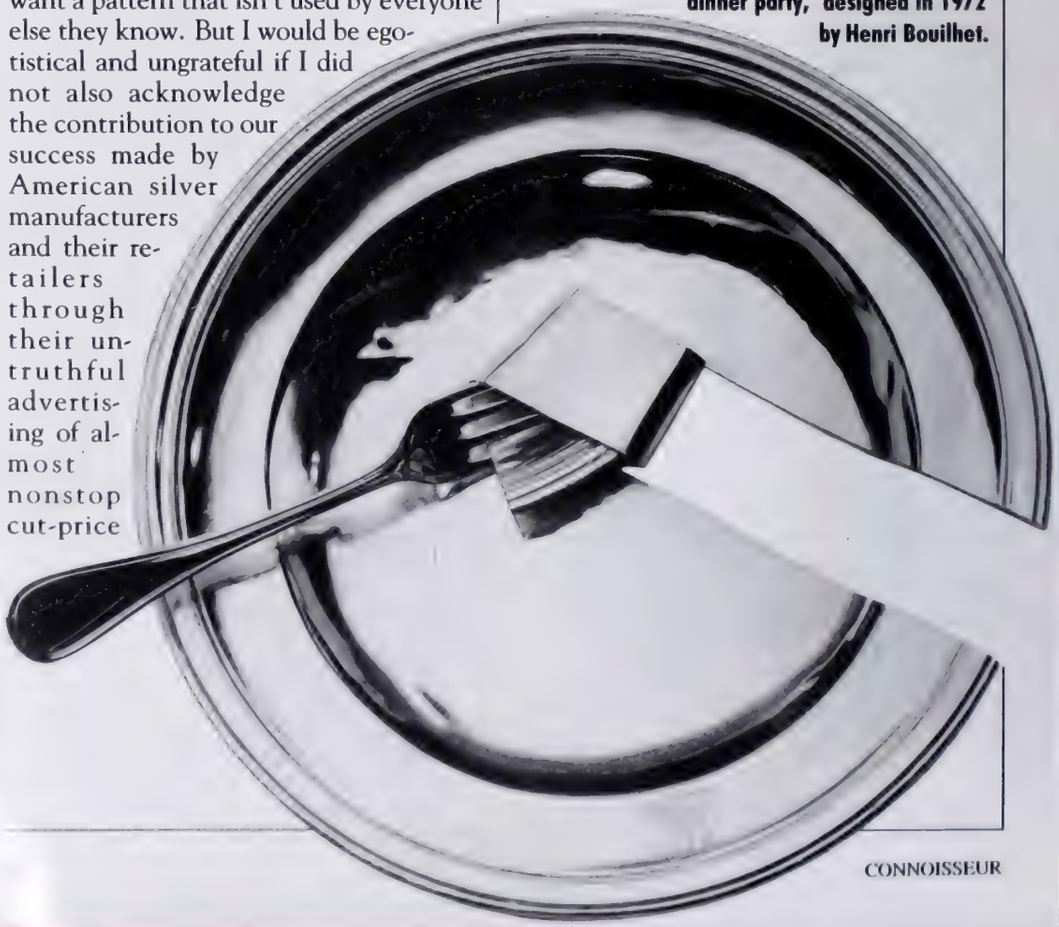

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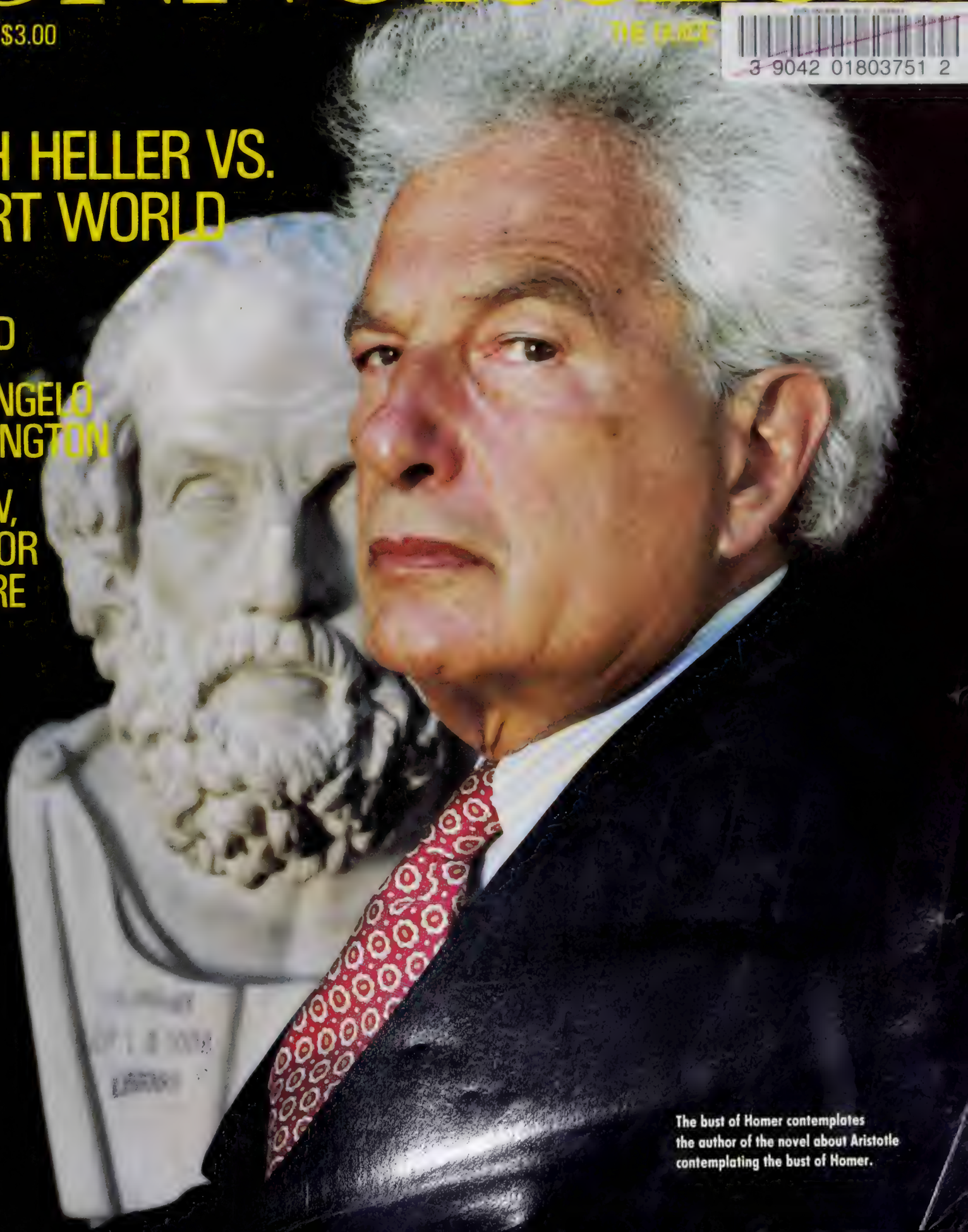

The bust of Homer contemplates the author of the novel about Aristotle contemplating the bust of Homer.

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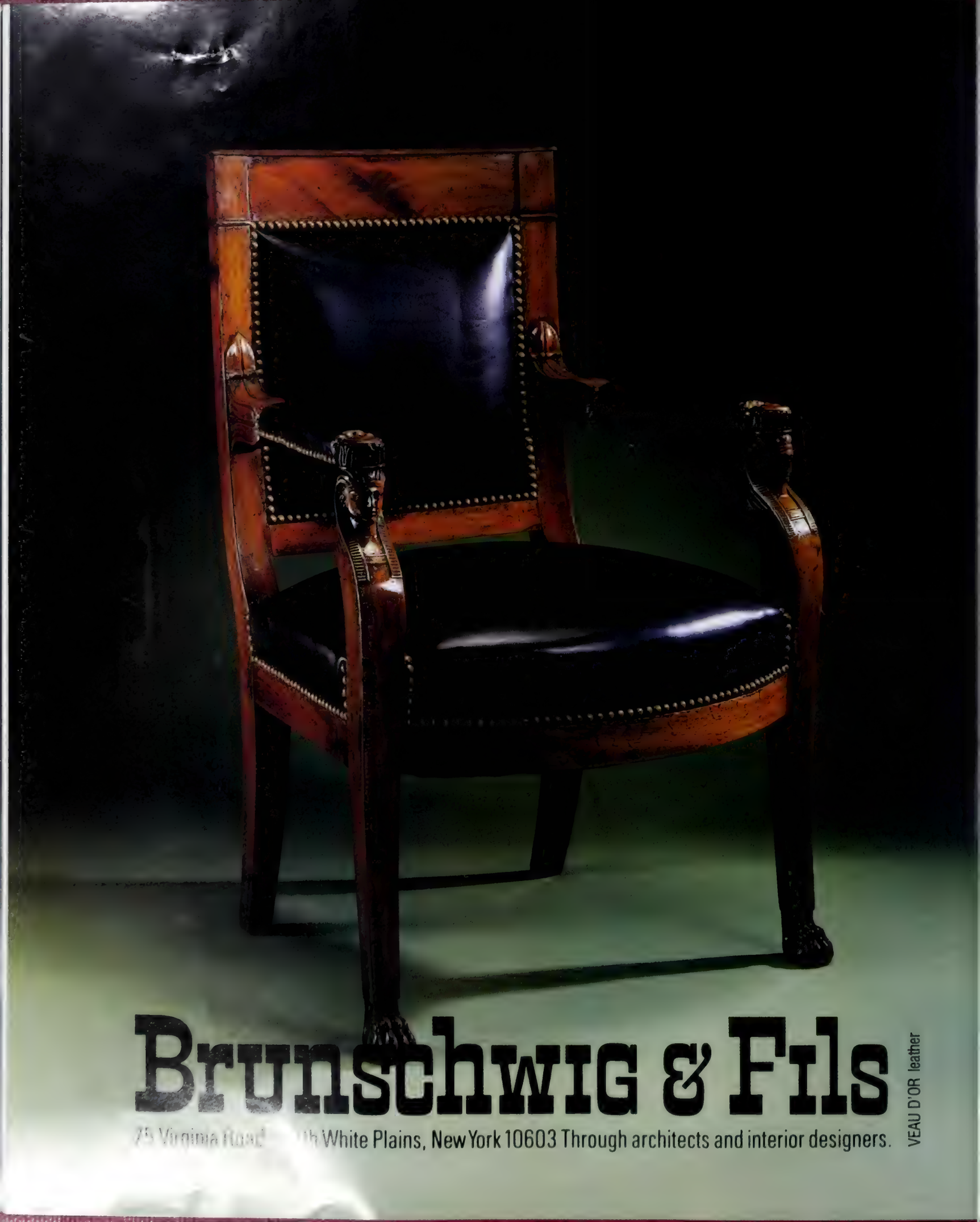
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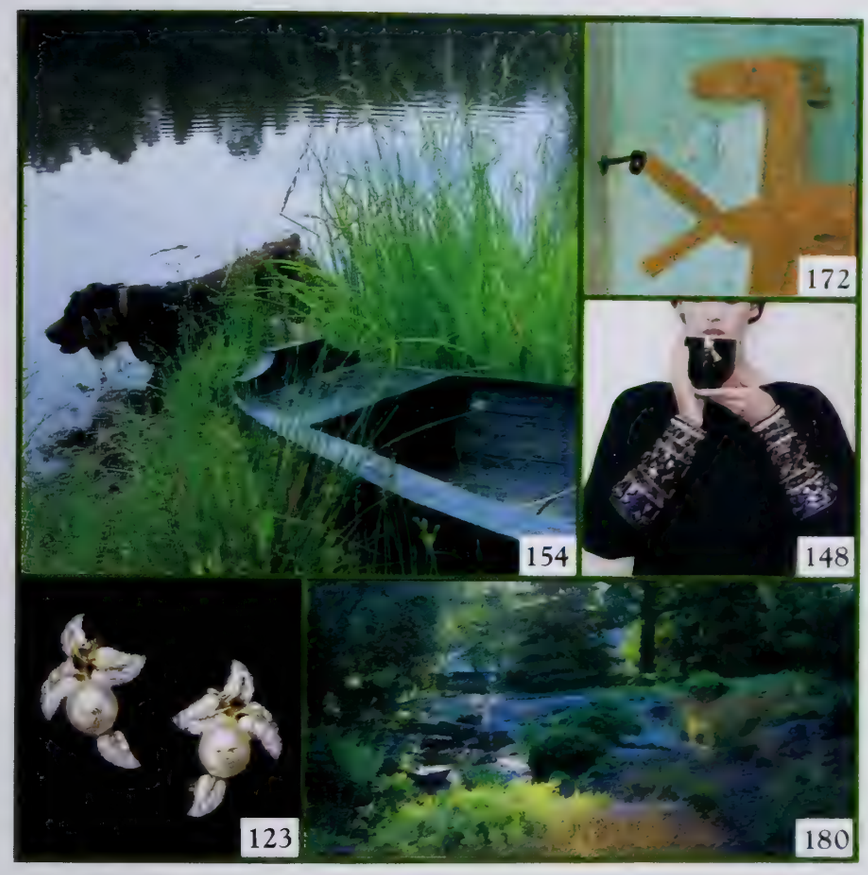

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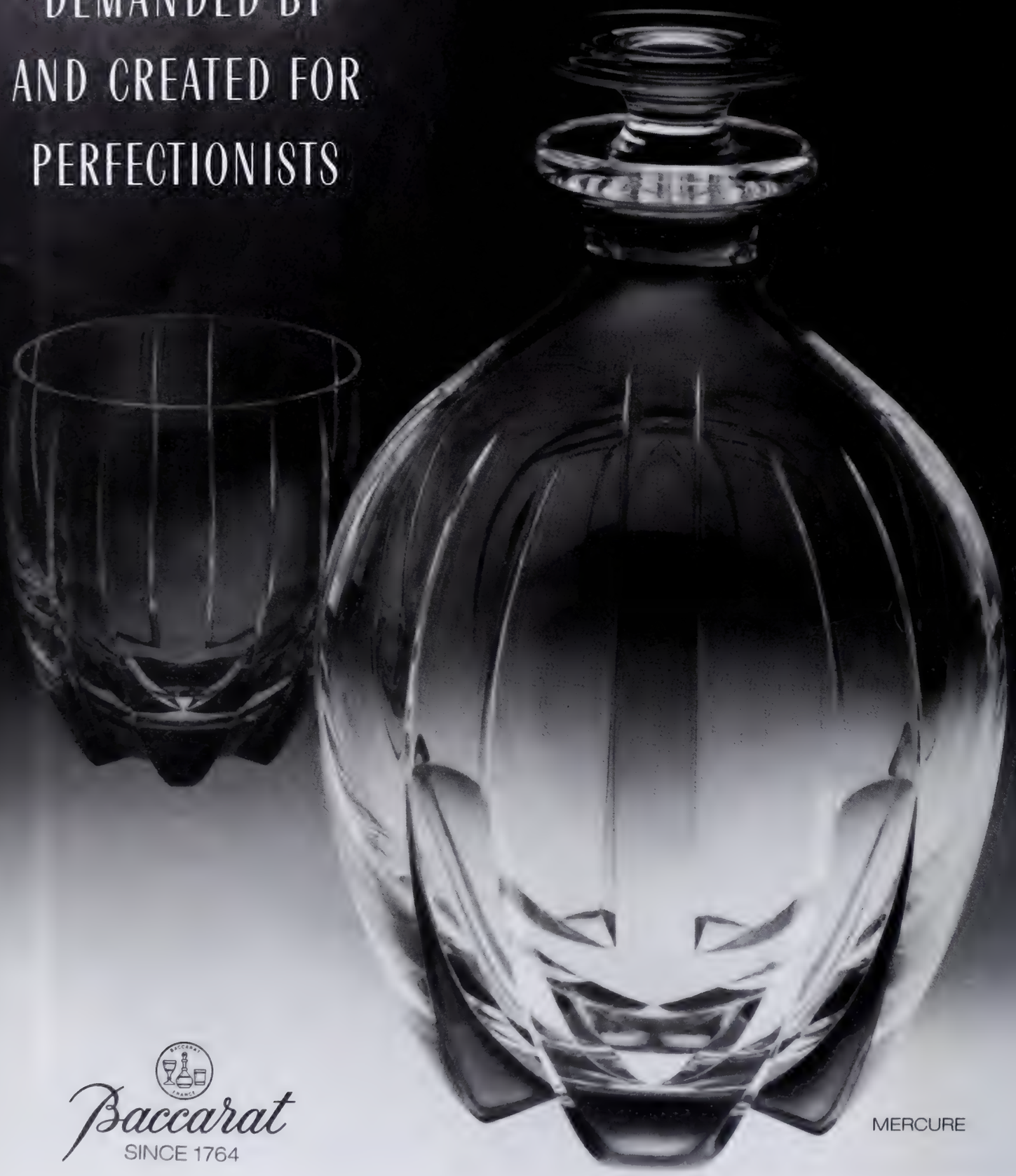

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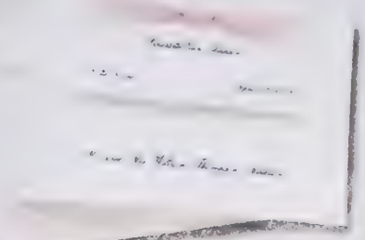

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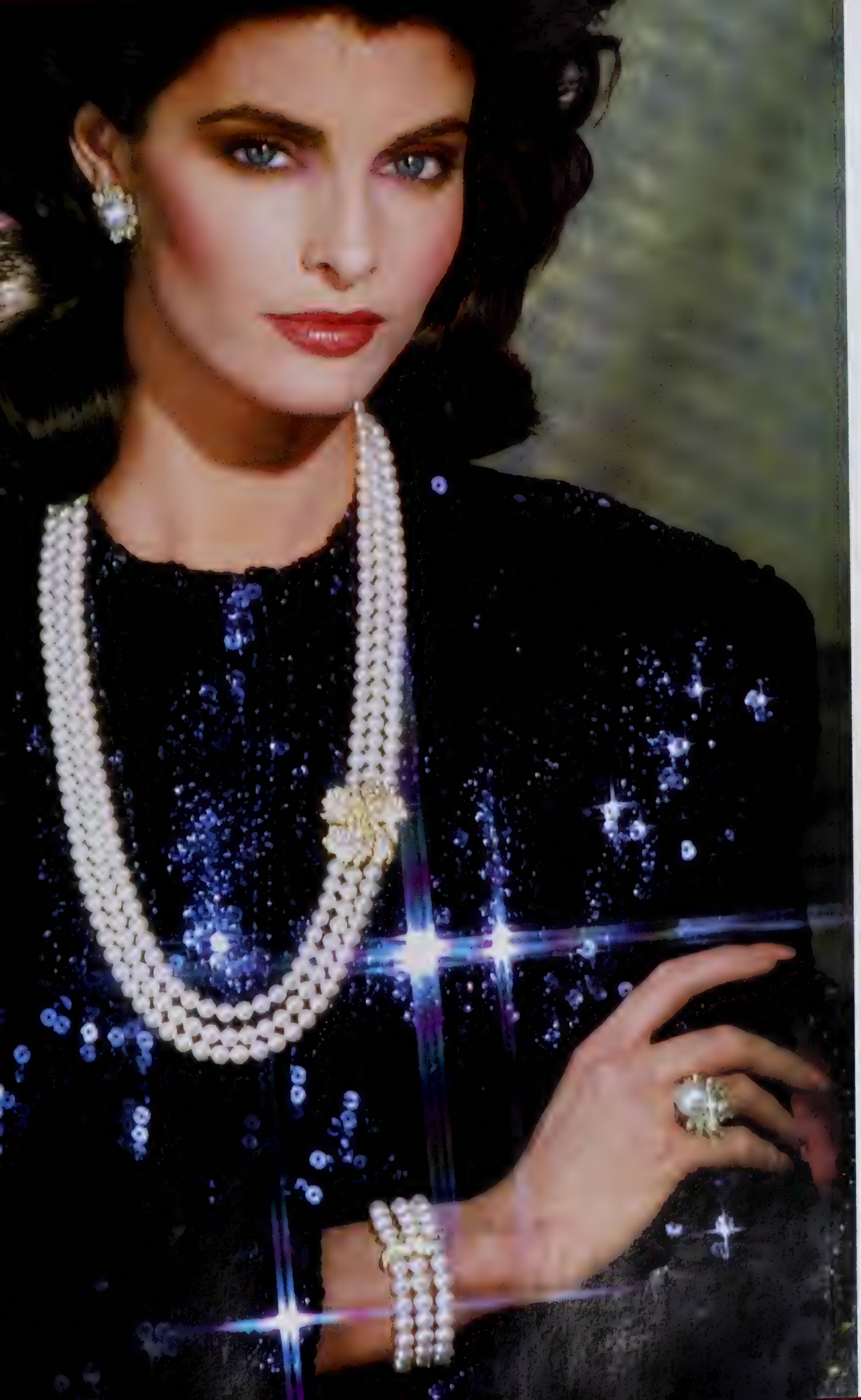

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COURTESY GALERIE GISMONDI, PARIS

Although major dealers have quit Paris's Biennale des Antiquaires, offerings like a still life by Alexandre-François Desportes, from the Gismondi gallery, keep it great.

WARS OF ANTIQUITY

The sensational news about the Paris Biennale des Antiquaires—probably the best show of its kind in the world—has been the acrimonious pullout of the self-styled Antiquaires à Paris, the association of top dealers who, despite the cordial loathing they are widely rumored to have for one another, have found it advantageous to maintain a kind of big-league group identity. The question is whether the Biennale, on at the Grand Palais until October 9, can be as good without the superlative offerings of the Antiquaires.

The "exclusive" attitude of the Antiquaires—Didier Aaron, Aveline, Michel Meyer, Galerie Perrin, Maurice Segoura, and Bernard Steinitz—did not go down very well among the other 144 participants at the Biennale, many of whom claim equally exalted pedigrees, not to mention topflight merchandise. The final straw came when, at the exhibition in 1986, the six Antiquaires set up their own, lavish wing, designed by the chic decorator Jacques Grange. That led to a confrontation, the secession, and a show of their own put on at the Bagatelle, in the Bois de Boulogne (see *Connoisseur*, June 1988).

Preliminary indications are that the Biennale will have no trouble remaining at the highest levels of quality. A number of new participants, many of them of known stature, have been invited to join. They include the Galerie Krugier of Geneva, which features works by Ingres, Whistler, and Redon, and the equally esteemed house of Cailleux, specialists in eighteenth-century antiques. Two eminent Paris dealers in medieval art, Bresset and Boccador, will be making their comeback to the Biennale. Also, there will be five rare-book dealers, up from last year's two. The British contingent will be strengthened and will include Stillman (Oriental), Earle D. Vandekar of Knightsbridge (porcelain), and the jeweler Garrard. Among those returning to the Biennale, specialists in eighteenth-century antiques who can claim to rival the Big Six include Fabre, Étienne Levy, and Gismondi.

That is suggestion enough that the withdrawal of the Antiquaires à Paris will matter rather little to collectors looking for first-quality material. If more evidence is needed, consider the presence of Demachy (Galerie Camoin), once associated with the Antiquaires à Paris, as well as Perrin. No, not Jacques Perrin, who was among the secessionists, but his son Patrick. He will make his debut at the same Biennale that his father left. It remains to be seen whether there will be any discernible difference between the fine antiques of Perrin *père* and Perrin *fils*. —*R. K.*

PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS PHOTO

Lucas Samaras once said he was responsible for the photography of the seventies. The problem with this outrageous claim is that it is very nearly true. Before 1969, Samaras, a capital-A Artist who exhibited bristling boxes, impractical chairs, and mirrored rooms, did not use a camera. Since then, photographs have played a prominent role in his work, as a current retrospective—"Lucas Samaras, Objects and Subjects: 1969–1986"—makes clear. Organized by Dianne Perry Vanderlip and Deborah Jordy at the Denver Art Museum, with a catalog from Abbeville Press, it is at the National Museum of American Art, in Washington, D.C., until October 16 and will travel through 1989.

When Samaras's *Auto-Polaroids* and *Photo Transformations* were first shown, in the early seventies, the art world decided to take photographs seriously. "It's almost as if I was the first artist to treat photography on the same level as making art," he says. He embodied photography quite literally, for the early work showed his face wearing makeup and grimaces, and his body nothing at all. Later, prominent art-world personalities posed for him anony-

mously, in the nude, while he inserted himself fully clothed into every portrait.

With this insistent concentration on his own image, he played midwife to the Me decade in art. Though this was branded narcissism, Samaras considers it closer to autobiography. "Throughout my career, I've always wanted to use my difference from normal Americans; I'm an immigrant. If I inhabit a certain body, that was part of my art. . . . Nature gives you this body; then society gives you certain coverings to protect it, cultural coverings." Samaras has uncovered himself for the camera in order to create artistic coverings. In the photographs, his chest sprouts spikes coaxed from the emulsion, and his face is reduced to a maelstrom of color centered on a voracious mouth. ("What are you?" he wrote in 1971, and answered, "A smiling hunger.") The recent *Panoramas* focus on extended still lifes and reclining figures made up of strips that repeat and misalign parts of the body.

Photography made its power known to Samaras early in his life: "When I came here from Greece" (he was eleven), "the only thing of value that I came with was the photographs that I brought with me. . . . It's almost as if it's the best way to depict the idea that you existed. You don't have to say that nature is aware of your existence, that God knows you are here and you are suffering or having joy. The camera gives you that proof that you have lived at least once."

He also says that because photographs are ubiquitous, they have become part of the way we understand all depictions: "We have to be taught what a painting is. We don't have to be taught what a photograph is." Does that mean that photography is more powerful than painting? "I can't say that," Samaras says. "I mustn't say that"—perhaps the last taboo recognized by a man who has broken so many. —*Vicki Goldberg*

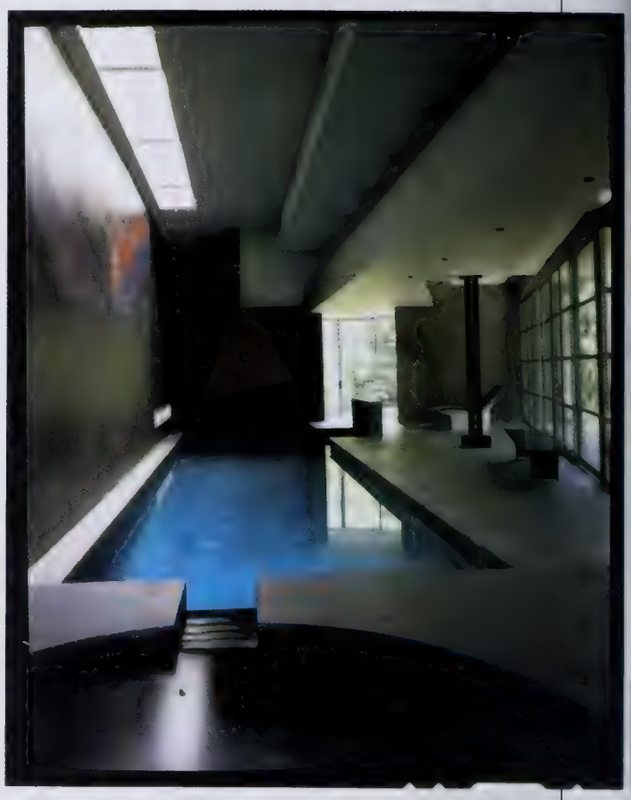
Lucas Samaras made himself the subject and object in *Photo Transformation*, 1973.

DESIGNER POOL

An indoor lap pool that began as "just a place to swim" has ended up as a masterly combination of art, architecture, and landscaping. The pool was designed for the Long Island home of Jerry and Emily Spiegel, major collectors of contemporary art, by the New York architect Tod Williams. From their unpretentious, Breueresque home, the Spiegels approach the pool house through the master bedroom; outside is a small courtyard containing only raked sand, moss stones, and a split-leaf Japanese maple.

Inside, the pool building has the stillness of a shrine. Water falls from an upper, round Jacuzzi to the narrow, sixty-foot main pool. The ruminative plash of the falls and the mercurial reflections on the ceiling seem to embody local deities. Frescoed on the stucco walls that wrap around two sides of the pool, in deep, luminous colors, is Sol LeWitt's *Triple Pyramid.* When the Spiegels purchased the work from a gallery, it contained only two pyramidal shapes, but when LeWitt visited the site of the pool, he decided that the pyramids would have been inelegantly distorted if stretched over so much space, and he drew a third.

One wall, running the length of the pool and made of glass panels, is "rotated" outward so that it echoes the triangular shape of the pyramids and opens space for a triangular granite deck. Through the panels, one can see a two-and-a-half-acre domain "reconfigured" by the landscape architect Tom Pritchard. A meadow outside resembles a gently shaken blanket; rising and falling and interlocking like fingers, the contours of the ground slope down to a dry pond bed. Clumps of cedars and azaleas are planted here and there.



The Spiegel lap pool, with fresco by Sol LeWitt.

Do the Spiegels actually go swimming here, or do they just contemplate the beauty of the scene? "My husband is in the water three times a day," said Emily Spiegel. "You swim. You see the sky and the gorgeous landscaping. You hear the water falling. It's exquisiteness all day long."

—*Sandy Heck*

STAGE OF SIEGE

In January, when the Haifa Municipal Theatre of Israel opened *Jerusalem Syndrome,* a play that presented the city as a large mental hospital under siege, it inspired a violent political demonstration outside the theater. Among other things, the play showed a Jew shooting an Arab woman in cold blood. The critics panned the play as two-dimensional and not worth the fuss. In the wake, the company's two artistic directors, including the play's author, stepped down, sparking speculation that the popular and controversial troupe might disengage itself from politics, thus losing some of its vitality. October 19 through November 19, the group performs in San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York, and Boston as part of the celebrations of the fortieth anniversary of the founding of Israel.

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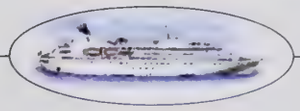

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COURTESY HAIFA MUNICIPAL THEATRE

Haifa Municipal Theatre's Doron Tavori (right) explores Jewish self-hatred in *The Soul of a Jew*.

fine performances as well as political and cultural soul-searching. One indicator of its stature: in Haifa (population, 227,000) it has a subscription audience of 30,000. It regularly tackles Arab-Jewish relations (taken up long before the recent uprisings) and the identity of the "New Jew" of Israel, in contrast to his predecessors of the Diaspora.

While the group has been warmly received at festivals in Edinburgh, Berlin, and Chicago, some politicians at home grumble that it is airing the country's dirty laundry and reportedly have pressured it to tone down. Yehoshua Sobol, its former artistic director and author of *Jerusalem Syndrome*, is said to have quit his post partly to take some heat off the theater, which receives large subsidies from the city and national governments.

Still, heading the U.S. program is Sobol's *The Soul of a Jew*. It explores the character of the Viennese Otto Weininger, Hitler's so-called favorite Jew. Weininger, himself an anti-Semite and misogynist, [illegible] in 1903. Deftly portrayed by [illegible] days out all [illegible] a Jew [illegible] Zionist [illegible] in loaded [illegible] from The Opsimist [illegible] ring to a combined pessimist and optimist), a fierce satire by Emil Habibi, the Arab editor of Haifa's daily, about a Palestinian trying to find his way in the newly created Israel of 1948.

The company's new artistic director, Gilberto Tofano, a fifty-eight-year-old native of Rome, says he remembers the Fascists' quashing political criticism and is not going to "shy away" from it himself. His style may be more subtle than that practiced by the company in the past, though. His choices for the coming year, including Beaumarchais's *The Marriage of Figaro*, will hark back to the French Revolution to make their points about human rights. He intends to create a "historical and cultural panorama" to offer "tools for understanding current issues"—which may amount to stepping back in order to take better aim.

—*Marsha Pomerantz*

★★★★★

The culminating event of Israel's fortieth-anniversary celebrations will be a spectacular performance on October 13 of Mahler's Second Symphony, at the foot of Masada, the first-century fortress where a thousand Jews committed suicide rather than submit to the Romans. The program, conducted by Zubin Mehta and hosted by Gregory Peck, will include fireworks, illuminations of the mountain timed to the music, dramatic readings of Jewish history, and a torchlight descent from the heights by Israeli children representing the twelve tribes of Israel. The producers plan a live hookup with Jews in Moscow, who will join in closing the concert by singing "Hatikvah," Israel's national anthem.

ON ANOTHER NOTE . . .

In 1966, the American composer Ned Rorem published his *Paris Diary*, chronicling his often scandalous life among French society in the early 1950s and naming lots of names. Rorem's twelve volumes of candid—and sometimes sordid—diaries and essays have, in the past, drawn him more notoriety than his musical career has. That, however, is changing.

This month, Rorem's sixty-fifth birthday is being celebrated by a flurry of activity, including all-Rorem programs in Philadelphia and New York, and, in November, a performance by Gidon Kremer of Rorem's Violin Concerto of 1985, with the New York Philharmonic conducted by Leonard Bernstein.

Somehow, during all his well-documented sexual pursuits and his high-profile social life, Rorem has found time to write some 300 art songs, including some of the best American songs of the past three decades, along with vast quantities of choral and instrumental music. All this music has been performed, some of it quite often, and he has been awarded all the standard prizes. His music shows a side of the composer quite different from that exposed in the diaries. "As a composer I've always thought of myself as elegant and tailored and trim and explicit," Rorem confesses. "When I was writing my *Paris Diary* I thought it was a different side of me—snotty and vengeful and, above all, open-ended, undisciplined."

MEXICO ON CANVAS

The best-known artworks of modern Mexico are the monumental murals of Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and Jose Clemente Orozoco, but the output of this trio is only a small part of the riches produced in postrevolutionary Mexico. The largest-ever exhibition of this legacy will be up at the Dallas Museum of Art, the only American venue, until October 30. The show includes all outstanding midcentury talents, with important works by Frida Kahlo (at right, *Diego in My Thoughts*, 1943), Rufino Tamayo, and the photographer Manuel Alvarez Bravo.

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JACK MITCHELL

N[illegible] spent as much time [illegible] has writing music.

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All lined up: military precision and poor lighting detract from the renovated Cloisters Treasury.

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"I know it sounds trite, but haven't we met before?"

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JACK MITCHELL

Ned Rorem may have spent as much time creating scandal as he has writing music.

While Rorem's diaries, by today's standards, barely titillate, his music, which honors simplicity, charm, and sophisticated tunefulness—and which was once considered hopelessly *recherché* in modern musical circles—seems fresh at a time when accessibility is back in musical vogue. Surprisingly, it is Rorem's instrumental and choral music rather than his songs that are now drawing the greatest attention. He attributes this mainly to the fact that there is no longer a market for art songs and that few singers are being trained to perform them, while there are a great many instrumental ensembles hungry for new scores. But Rorem insists that song and story are at the heart of every authentic musical utterance and has taken to orchestrating his songs without the words, as he does for one, lovely movement of the Violin Concerto.

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Then, there is the lighting. At some vitrines—the ones with the great manuscripts and pages—the visitor has to squint in order to see much; here, the domination of conservators has gone too far. On the other hand, in the showcases with ivories, silver, and bronzes, the light is too harsh. This all adds up to a markedly careless environment, which gives the impression "The public be damned." Too bad, for that is what The Cloisters—the most user-friendly museum in town—was never intended to do. —*T.H.*

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CONNOISSEUR'S WORLD

SOUND IDEA

Telarc International Corporation was an all but unknown label back in 1978, when it released the first commercial digital recording of classical music in the United States. Ten years and thirteen Grammy Awards later, the Cleveland-based company is considered by many audiophiles to be the preeminent maker of recordings in a now crowded compact-disc market.

"We take a *re*-creative approach," explains Jack Renner, Telarc's chairman and engineering mastermind. "We re-create sound as it is heard in a symphony hall and don't alter it later in a studio." Toward that end, Renner perfected the concept of "minimal miking," cutting back the number of microphones used in recording sessions from dozens to a scant three.

Herds of cows and scant miking are part of Telarc's approach of "recording without a net."

Robert Woods, Telarc's president and production guru, likens Telarc's unique recording process to shooting a "sound picture"—capturing a single, panoramic take of a live performance, rather than pasting together a collage of individual snapshots afterward. This "minimal miking" technique, or what Renner refers to as "recording without a net," is somewhat risky, since it allows little in the way of postproduction tinkering; but the result is music that is more balanced and faithful to the artist's intent than what is produced by more-conventional techniques that use many microphones.

This past year, Telarc collected three Grammys, including "Classical Producer of the Year," for Woods, and "Best Engineered Classical Recording," with the Atlanta Symphony's Fauré *Requiem*, for Renner. The awards acknowledge the sonic, as well as the artistic, achievement of the company's work. Renner and Woods believe they were the first to apply the term

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TABLE: George II carved walnut center table, circa 1760

ACCESSORIES: Collection of decalcomania vases from the Collector's Gallery at Kentshire

BOOKCASE: Regency ebonized and painted secretaire with fitted satinwood interior, circa 1820

CHAIR: Fine George III carved mahogany bergere, circa 1800

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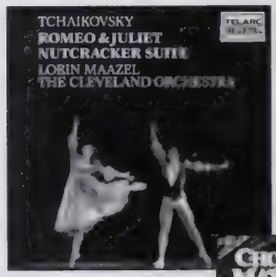

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"digital"—the computer process by which sound signals are broken down into patterns of numbers—to audio recordings, and they seldom pass up a chance to demonstrate the tremendous potential of digital technology. Such flourishes as the use of real cannon in the *1812* Overture or the actual storm that was included in the *Grand Canyon* Suite have become something of a company trademark. Even a Frankie Laine recording of "Round-Up" came in for special treatment when Renner and Woods recruited a herd of live cows for chorus work.

In addition to cattle, Telarc has begun to attract such major artists as André Previn and the Vienna Philharmonic, and the Berlin Philharmonic under Lorin Maazel. The label has also expanded its musical base to include jazz and pop titles, suggesting that Telarc's influence will be felt long after Frankie Laine and the cows have come home. —*Dan Stashower*

THE BALANCHINES IN THE CLOSET

Balanchine was born under Czar Nicholas II and died under Ronald Reagan. In between, he made more than 400 major ballets and transformed ballet into a medium for twentieth-century expression. He altered it from within, making it both denser and faster—a Corvette as opposed to a carriage—and stepped up the level of virtuosity in a way that seemed simultaneously miraculous and hip.

With a career of this scope, when the life ends, the sorting out begins. Now, as his balletic remains are being collected, Balanchine's castoffs are coming down from the attic, and their reappearance may alter the way we see him. As Balanchine got older, he edited himself, eliminating stories, symbols, decor—everything but the steps and the music. The result has been a repertory that is more classical-looking than his actual career. As past ballets resurface, we will begin to see more of the romantic Balanchine: visionary ballets, ballets designed by surrealists, ballets in darkened ballrooms where the woman appears and vanishes and the man's doom is forever sealed.

Two such productions are coming to New York in October. Of all the "lost" Balanchine ballets, probably the one that knowledgeable people have pined over the most is *Cotillon*, an enchanted-ballroom ballet, set to music by Chabrier, which Balanchine made in 1932 for the "baby ballerina" Tamara Toumanova (she was twelve) and which has not been seen since the 1940s. At its center lies the famous "Hands of Fate" pas de deux, in which a mysterious black-gloved woman, covering her face with her hands, enchants the

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Baby ballerina: in 1932, twelve-year-old Tamara Toumanova starred in *Cotillon*, to be revived by the Joffrey.

fated man. *Cotillon* will be remounted for the Joffrey Ballet by Millicent Hodson and Kenneth Archer, the team that last year reconstructed Nijinsky's *Rite of Spring*. The New York premiere is on October 26. In the spring, the company will probably take *Cotillon* on tour through Chicago, Houston, and Portland, among other cities, on its way to Los Angeles.

The other black pearl is Balanchine's *Mozart Violin Concerto*, which he made in 1942 for the Teatro Colón, in Buenos Aires, and then pretty much forgot about—as did everyone else, until Esmeralda Agoglia, a former ballerina with the Teatro Colón, came and taught it to the Tulsa Ballet Theatre last fall. The *Violin Concerto* is less literally a ball. (Indeed, in its original, Pavel Tchelitchew decor, it was more of a cosmological fantasy.) But it has strange conceits—dancers brandishing candelabra and cornets, lines of girls drifting like chromosomes—and a hushed

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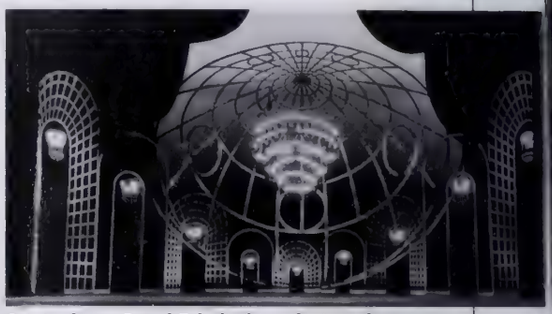

Original set: Pavel Tchelitchew designed the decor for the 1942 production of *Mozart Violin Concerto* in Buenos Aires.

pas de deux of amazing beauty.

Tulsa will bring *Mozart Violin Concerto* to Brooklyn College October 15 and 16. With *Cotillon,* this will be *the* event of the fall ballet season. —*Joan Acocella*

LOCAL NEWS, BY SATELLITE

It may have made a big splash in St. Vincent's when Fitzroy Goodluck won that island's Fisherman of the Year title last spring. But in the United States? Hardly a ripple—except among viewers of "CNN World Report," who were treated to a three-minute story by a local television reporter, complete with deep-sea footage and an exclusive interview with the victorious Goodluck.

If that sounds less than earth-shattering—well, it was. But the story—a bit rough technically and earnestly reported—provided a glimpse of day-to-day life in a country whose only hope of making the regular U.S. news lies in natural disaster or political upheaval. It epitomizes the ragged charm and quirky fascination of a show that is fast becoming the global village's electronic bulletin board.

"World Report" is a weekly collection of indigenously produced news and features that CNN bills as the planet's first-ever global newscast. (For a profile of CNN's news operation, see *Connoisseur,* August 1988.) Since it first aired, a year ago, close to 100 broadcasters from nearly as many nations, including many in the Eastern bloc and the Third World, have signed up to contribute pieces. CNN throws the material on the air as is, without editorial comment, beginning midnight Sunday Eastern time, and running until there is no more left (usually two hours; there is also a half-hour version at seven). CNN asks little more than that stories run three minutes or less.

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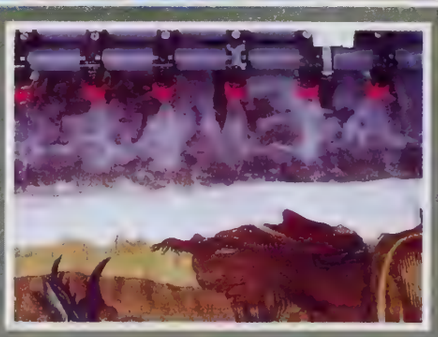

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CNN's funky "World Report" presents hometown programs from everywhere.

dling that makes the show stand out. A Soviet report on the pullout from Afghanistan notes that departing soldiers have donated their housing to refugees. Sandinista TV turns a jaundiced eye to squabbling contra factions. Jordan TV details squalid conditions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Ethiopia's ETV shows troops responding with revolutionary fervor to the "call of the motherland." Slanted? Sure. But so is U.S. news. Anyway, that is part of the point: "World Report" offers often myopic Americans a non–United States perspective on the world.

The executive producer, Stuart Loory, says that "the American people are sophisticated enough to know propaganda when they see it." Loory notes that despite its inconvenient time slot, "World Report" seems to be building a loyal audience in the United States and abroad. As a result, he says, millions of viewers are getting an opportunity to see other countries as they see themselves—from the most pressing issues to the Fitzroy Goodlucks.

—David Ruben

RADICAL SUBURBIA

Great movie subjects are rare, but Sidney Lumet's *Running on Empty* certainly has one: the fate of the hard-core anti–Vietnam War activists. It's about Annie and Arthur Pope (Christine Lahti and Judd Hirsch), ex–student radicals who went underground in 1971 after blowing up a military-research lab in which a janitor was mistakenly blinded and paralyzed. Now, sixteen years later, with two sons in tow, they are still on the run from the FBI, living unassuming lives under assumed names, always ready to scram to the next suburb. When their oldest son, Danny (River Phoenix), a gifted pianist, is given the opportunity to attend Juilliard, the Popes are faced with an impossible dilemma: if Danny leaves the family, they will probably never see one another again.

For the sixties generation, the Popes' story is almost primal; it is the flip side of the current Vietnam-movie version. The Popes may be an extreme case, but their conflicts apply for a whole generation of activists: Annie and Arthur are trying to survive without extinguishing their idealism. They have held on to their beliefs, but they know their time has passed. They are relics, but, unlike most of their compatriots from the sixties, they still live with the consequences of their activism.

Cynicism and the years have mellowed Annie and Arthur's rage. They survey the wreckage of their lives, and, like the good bourgeois families for which they once had disdain, they recognize that their proudest achievement, their greatest success, is their children. But do they love them enough to let them go?

Like many of Lumet's films, *Running on Empty* brims with good performances. A scene between Lahti and Steven Hill, as the disapproving blueblood father, whom Annie has not seen in fifteen years, is a model of controlled intensity.

I wish, however, that the script were not given over so much to Danny; it feels like a sop to young audiences. And I wish that the Popes' political ideas were dramatized more sharply.

BARBRA WALZ/COURTESY WARNER BROS

The FBI is after Mom and Dad for a political bombing, in Lumet's *Running on Empty*.

The film's ideology—that everyone is innocent, everyone is guilty—is not very helpful, or daring. But *Running on Empty* connects with the emotional drift of a generation, and it gets to you. It is the latest, and perhaps the last, chapter in a long, noble, sad American saga. *—Peter Rainer*

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MOUNTAIN MAN NORTHERN MAN RATTLESNAKE THE CHEYENNE OUTLAW

CONNOISSEUR'S WORLD

NEW-WAVE CHINA

Xi'an was the city that made headlines in 1974, when its fabulous army of 8,000 ancient terra-cotta warriors and horses and chariots was unearthed. In the past few years, the Xi'an Film Studio has revived Xi'an's long artistic tradition, producing a new wave of world-class films that have broken the Chinese propaganda mold. Some of them, seen for the first time in the United States at the recent Telluride Film Festival, are slated to travel to nine U.S. cities in the coming months.

Much of the credit for Xi'an's offerings goes to the outspoken and energetic director Wu Tianming, who, since 1983, has been recruiting directors from China's film academy in Beijing. These young filmmakers, called the "Fifth Generation" by Chinese who count from the first Chinese filmmakers, in 1912, are unusual because they experienced the crackdown on bourgeois influence during the Cultural Revolution of the late 1960s but, unlike their predecessors, later had a chance to see films by foreigners like Godard, Fellini, Antonioni, Kurosawa, Huston, and Coppola. Determined to jettison propagandistic filmmaking formulas that were a cross between those of Hollywood of the 1940s and those of Soviet and Chinese theater, they sought to express their ideas about life as it is, not as it should be.

A lot is said in these films that is truthful and fresh and resonates with the developments in China. For instance, Wu's strikingly shot film *Old Well* portrays a village's generations-old search for water, now led by a young man who has studied modern hydrology. A sequence in which two villages fight over a well was controversial in China, because it showed discord among peasants. So was a scene in which two people are shown nude.

Another rural film that mixes traditional culture with modern times is *King of the Children*. The director, Chen Kaige, tells the poignant story of an educated youth sent off during the Cultural Revolution to teach at a remote jungle commune. To the anger of local authorities, he challenges traditional methods, teaching his students to think for themselves. Like several other of these films, the movie shows grinding poverty amid an awesome landscape.

Other directors have articulated themes relating to China's modernization. Traditional resistance to change is depicted in *Wild Mountains* and *On the Beach*. Politics as an obstacle to modernization is the theme of the delicious comedy *Black Can-*

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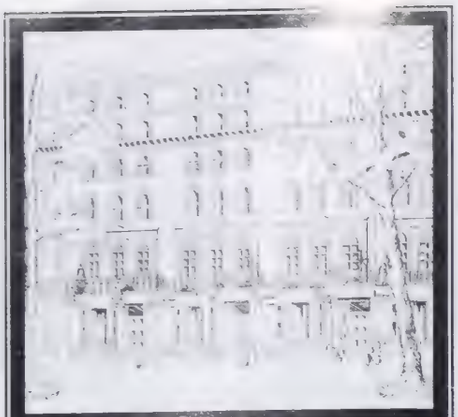

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GU CHANG-WEI

Propaganda buster: a young teacher rebels against a rigid educational system in Chen Kaige's *King of the Children*.

non Incident. A violent story about a family's life in old China, *Red Sorghum,* won the top prize (the Golden Bear) at this year's Berlin Film Festival.

During 1988 and 1989 these and other Xi'an films will be traveling to Boston's Museum of Fine Arts, the Asia Society, in New York, the Kennedy Center, in Washington, the Asian Art Museum, in San Francisco, the Seattle Film Festival, and venues in Chicago, Denver, St. Paul, and Los Angeles. —*Joan Lebold Cohen*

FLEET STREET STAR

Two years ago, the genteel rivalry among the "quality" press of Britain was disturbed by the first intruder in many years. With less fanfare than might be expected, the *Independent* was born, or, rather, sprang forth fully formed. It has since taken over the moral and cultural high ground that Rupert Murdoch's *Times* vacated, apparently as a voluntary act.

SANFORD KOPWAN

The solid virtues of the *Independent*'s editor, Andreas Whittam Smith, a serious, intelligent man, are reflected in the paper's coverage of the arts and other subjects. He knew where to find the best; among his recruits are some with famous names. Sir William Rees-Mogg, a mildly liberal, bookish pillar of the Establishment and the last editor of the *Times,* now writes feature pieces with strong viewpoints. Peter Jenkins, more recently arrived, has long been one of Britain's top two or three political columnists. Less famous are a couple of foreign correspondents from the elegant weekly *Spectator*, Patrick Marnham and Alexander Chancellor. Marnham, in Paris, is responsible for one of the paper's great successes. He writes short stories about little old women buying fish or *crimes passionels* on the Métro, so well that the more mundane stuff about elections and such seems an unwelcome interruption. Chancellor, at first stationed in Washington, concentrated mainly on how strange and frightening America was but became enraptured with the place. Only with difficulty has he been lured home to start a Saturday magazine for the paper. (It seems that no one had previously figured out that that is when the weekend begins.) The writers in charge of the arts pages are less well known, but the paper's coverage is, nevertheless, or perhaps as a result, lively and authoritative. Unprecedented space is given to books, with a daily review as well as a weekly splurge. It also takes the movies more seriously than the competition does; films are listed by name, not by cinema.

The only stumbling block is that the blessed Whittam Smith is without a shred of humor. He is, however, clever enough to have spotted that himself and has brought in the *Times* columnist Miles

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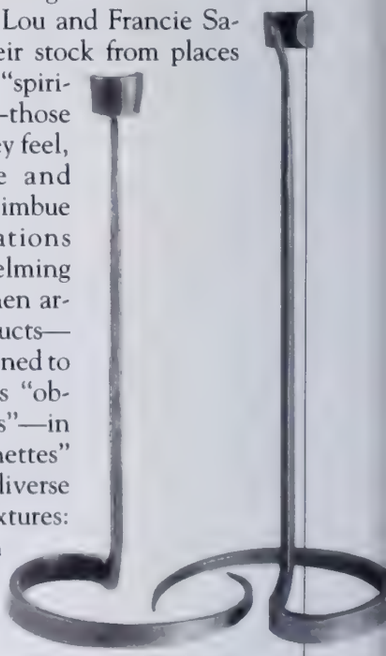
Kington, who writes a funny piece *every day*—think of it—and the country's best political cartoonist, Nicholas Garland, and the best strip, *Alex*. That is excellent camouflage, but doubts persist in the humor department. Of course, it is no mean feat for a high-toned newspaper to be funny in a country where the gutter press, perhaps the most squalid in the world, features headlines like HE ATE MUM'S BUDGIE and NO BRAS FOR THE BAND every day. The *Indie* (it already has a nickname—a good sign) can seem a tiny bit dull, but that is a small price to pay for excellence. —*Mark Amory*

LOW-TECH MECCA

Zona is probably the only store outside of Tucson where you can buy an eight-foot Saguaro cactus form. For that matter, it is probably the only store outside of Tucson that assumes you would ever want one. Part museum, part country store, Zona is a specialty shop in New York's SoHo neighborhood that caters to its customers' cosmic needs and desires. In its storefront, situated at 97 Greene Street, it has become a mecca for a carefully selected collection of "life-style accessories"—things like southwestern furniture, found objects and sculpture, handcrafted housewares, rugs and bedspreads, roughhewn terra-cotta, and traditional gardening tools.

The owners, Lou and Francie Sagar, acquire their stock from places they refer to as "spiritual pockets"—those areas where, they feel, the landscape and force of nature imbue the local creations with an overwhelming beauty. They then arrange the products—one is more inclined to refer to them as "objects" or "pieces"—in a series of "vignettes" that juxtapose diverse cultures and textures: a southwestern cabinet opens to reveal rows of gray astrakhans; Japanese cherry-bark boxes house Navaho tea bundles; Italian marble figs are centered on a bamboo presentation mat. Each item is accompanied by a small



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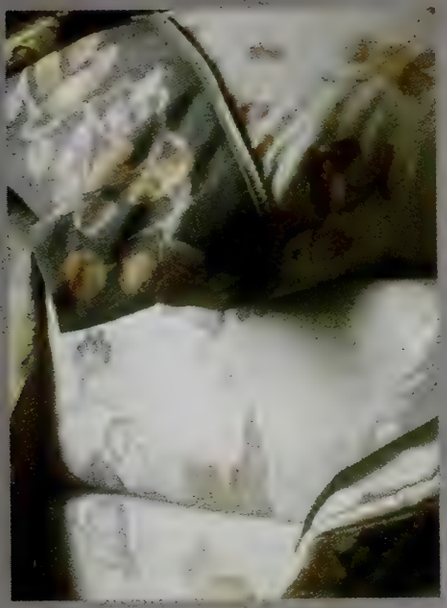

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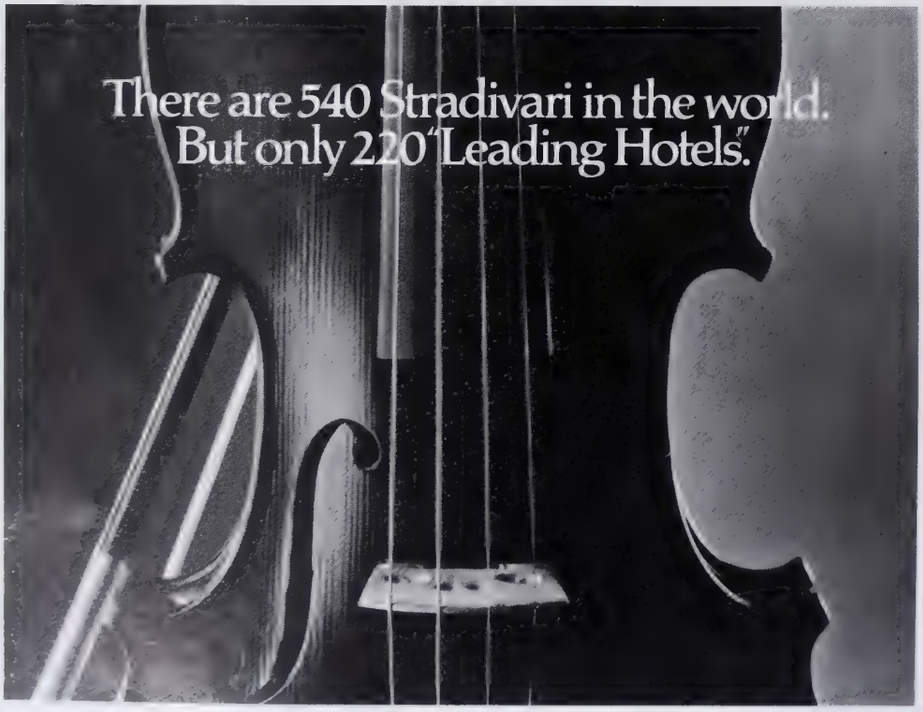

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—Lisa Hoving

FRUIT OF OUR FOREBEARS

Before apple growers invented Granny Smith and Red Delicious, there were varieties like Seek-No-Further, Spitzenburg, and Talville Blanc d'Hiver—centuries-old apples as different from modern ones as a home-baked loaf is from Wonder Bread. Today's growers have bred the taste out of apples in the interest of producing a few bruiseless, pretty-looking specimens with a long shelf life. A chance to taste many of the older and better varieties will come when Carolyn and Terry Harrison hold their annual "heritage" tasting at their Sonoma, California, Antique Apple Nursery, on October 21–23.

The Harrisons have scoured old orchards and networked with amateur collectors to find the seventy-five varieties they nurture. Many of them would have gone down to extinction after the turn of the century, when growers began narrowing their repertoire to a few, had it not been for the efforts of these preservationists. "One of the nice things is that we get an awful lot of compliments, especially from older people who thought they'd never again taste apples like the ones they had

SHOWPIECES

Tiffany's longtime window designer Gene Moore now has his own wares to display, with a collection of silver-and-enamel circus performers.

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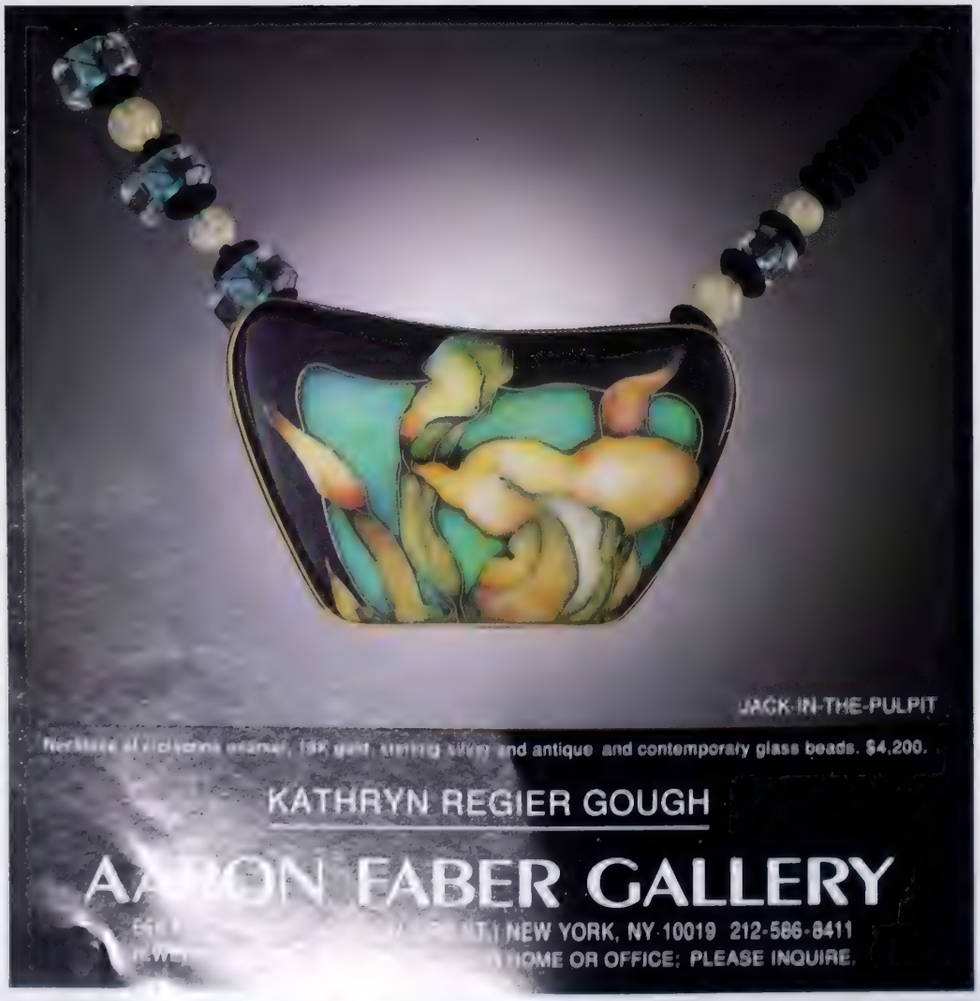

Connoisseur's World

TINA LIMER

off the farm when they were children," said Terry Harrison.

Among the Harrisons' old-fashioned fruits are the Newtown Pippin, fine-grained, crisp, and aromatic, and the White Astrachan, a native of Russia, tender and pale, with a delicate, perfumed flavor (not available for tasting). Terry Harrison's favorite is the Spitzenburg, which he describes as having a flavor so intense that it tastes as if spices have been added. The Spitzenburg was also Thomas Jefferson's apple of choice. In hopes that others will carry on such lines, he and his wife encourage visitors not only to take home the fruit but to buy some young trees for their own backyards. —*Eunice Fried*

Color Me Chic

As Isaac Mizrahi's first fashion show came to an end, last spring, the audience jumped to its feet, clapping and cheering; Mizrahi was proclaimed American fashion's newest star. This fall his clothes will be sold in about thirty stores across the country.

The twenty-six-year-old Brooklyn-born designer says he designs for the free-spirited American woman, who has "scrubbed skin, bobbed hair, and a body in working order, who throws on some simple thing" like his camel jumpsuit with a fur-trimmed hood "to go bicycling, or shopping."

Mizrahi's fall collection consists of separates—jumpsuits, coats, pants, blouses, blazers, sweaters—rendered in brilliant colors that work perfectly when dashed together, like brushstrokes of paint. Take, for instance, a gold blouse and a salmon overshirt with pumpkin pants and a hot-orange coat, or a sky blue silk blouse and emerald crewneck worn under a char-

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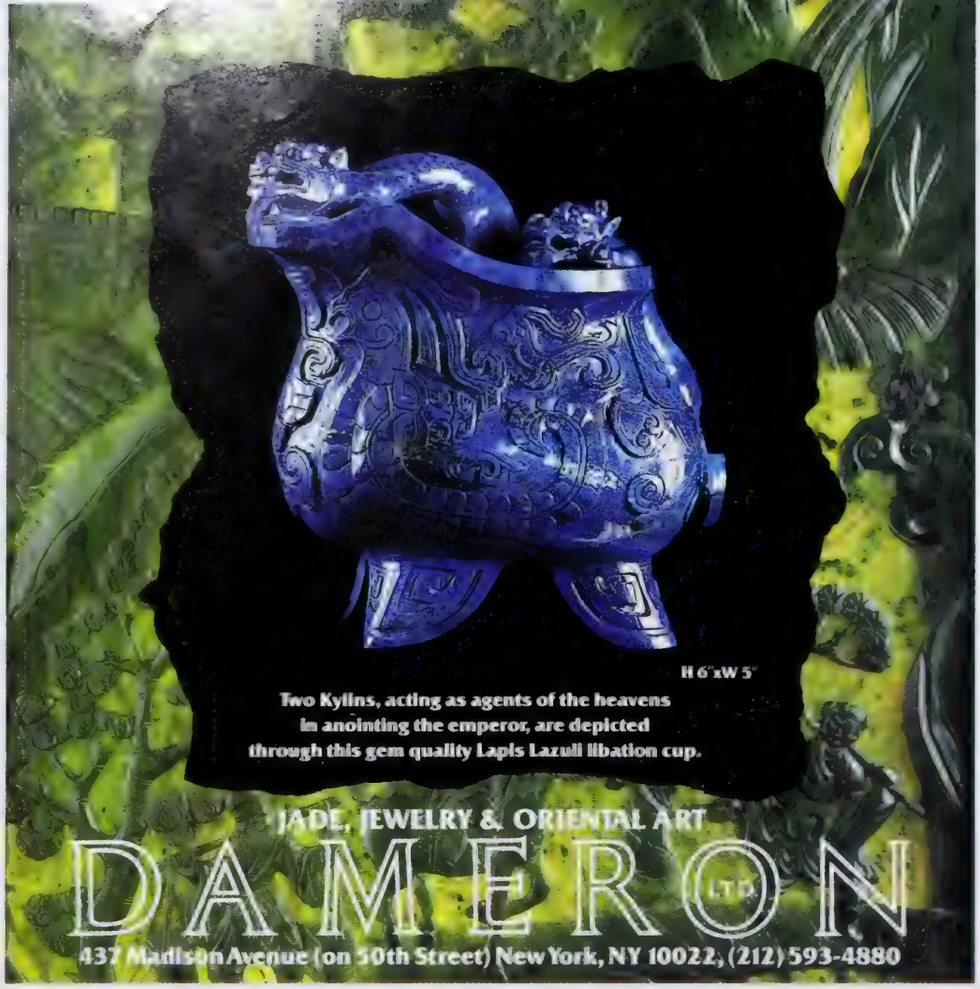

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treuse jumpsuit and a seafoam coat.

Designed for women who travel between different climates, Mizrahi's "Spa" collection, to be sold from October to January, is made up of easy-to-pack pieces that can be worn in layers. Jumpsuits are an important element in the collection, as they will be in his spring offerings. "As I design the spring collection," he says, "the images that keep hitting me are 'hot' and 'desert.' "

ISAAC MIZRAHI

Mizrahi's fall collection: for women who travel.

The designer's New York studio is a brick loft with huge windows and unfinished beams. Assistants bustle around sewing machines, wooden tables, and bolts of cloth—purple, turquoise, green, pink, orange—that give the place the feel of a fairy-tale workshop. Asks Mizrahi, "What is happier than color?" *—Bart Boehlert*

SCENT PHILOSOPHER

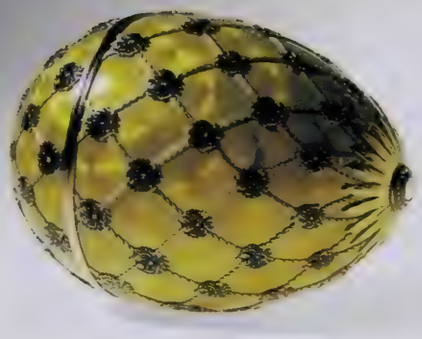
The art of perfumery rarely exists in its pure form. Today, to be successful, a fragrance (the stronger the better) must be married to a catchy concept, a controversial ad campaign, and a promotional budget resembling a phone number.

The late Robert Ricci, head of the haute couture house Nina Ricci, detested fragrances that overwhelm. "At a point," he said shortly before his death, this summer, "a woman will feel invaded by a too powerful scent. And she will stop buying it." The man who introduced the classic L'Air du Temps in 1948 was discussing his latest fragrance, Nina, introduced in the United States in August.

Fragrance

Ricci tried to address these concerns in Nina, a woody, floral accord of 102 ingredients, over half of them natural. The perfume reflects his philosophy that a fragrance should convey charm and seductiveness, not surprise and aggressiveness. Surely the message—both olfactory and philosophical—will bring a smile to those who value perfume and merely tolerate the pizzazz. *—Jill Resnick*

Edited by Kevin Krajick



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October Highlights

Pair of antique
diamond earclips.
Estimate: $12,000–$15,000

Magnificent Jewels
Wednesday, October 19 at
10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
Viewing: October 15–18

Jean Beraud, *La Rue de la Paix*, signed, oil on canvas,
25¾ x 36¼ in. (65.4 x 92.1 cm.).
Estimate: $160,000–$220,000

19th Century European Paintings, Drawings, Watercolors and Sculpture
Wednesday, October 26 at
10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
Viewing: October 22–25

A rare George III spherical
skeleton clock, signed
Henricus Gratte Invenit and
Fecit London.
Estimate: $18,000–$22,000

English Clocks and Scientific Instruments
Saturday, October 22 at 2 p.m.
Viewing: October 15–21

Constantin Brancusi, *Bird in Space*, gelatin silver print,
1920's 9⅜ x 7 in., mounted
Estimate: $10,000–$15,000

19th and 20th Century Photographs
Monday, October 31 at
10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
Viewing: October 27–30

Auctions to be held in our galleries at 502 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10022 (212/546-1000). For further information on specific items in each sale please ask for the relevant department. For viewing and sale information on other Christie's sales this month, call Auctionline (212/371-5438). Color-illustrated catalogues are available from Christie's Publications (718/784-1480).

CHRISTIE'S
NEW YORK

October Highlights

An important pair of George I walnut stools, circa 1720.
Estimate: $50,000–$70,000

Important English Furniture and Objects of Art
Saturday, October 22 at 10 a.m.
Viewing: October 15–21

A pair of monumental Victorian silver-gilt flasks based on 16th century originals in Green Vaults, Dresden, by Sebastian Garrard, London, 1890. Estimate $30,000–$50,000

Important English and Continental Silver and Objects of Vertu
Tuesday, October 25 at 2 p.m.
Viewing: October 22–25

A fine four-color gold and guilloche enamel picture frame marked Fabergé, workmaster Victor Aarne, St. Petersburg, circa 1890, 3½ in. (9 cm.) high.
Estimate: $20,000–$30,000

Fine Russian Works of Art
Tuesday, October 25 at 10 a.m.
Viewing: October 20–24

A fine and rare Louis XV giltwood duchesse d'enfant brisée, circa 1780, stamped G + IACOB, 30½ in. (76.2 cm.) high, 59 in. (147.5 cm.) wide.
Estimate $70,000–$90,000

The Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Franklin N. Groves
Important French Furniture, Clocks, Objects of Art and Eastern Carpets
Saturday, October 15 at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
Viewing: October 8–14

Auctions to be held in our galleries at 502 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10022 (212/546-1000). For further information on specific items in each sale please ask for the relevant department. For viewing and sale information on other Christie's sales this month, call Auctionline (212/371-5438). Color-illustrated catalogues are available from Christie's Publications (718/784-1480).

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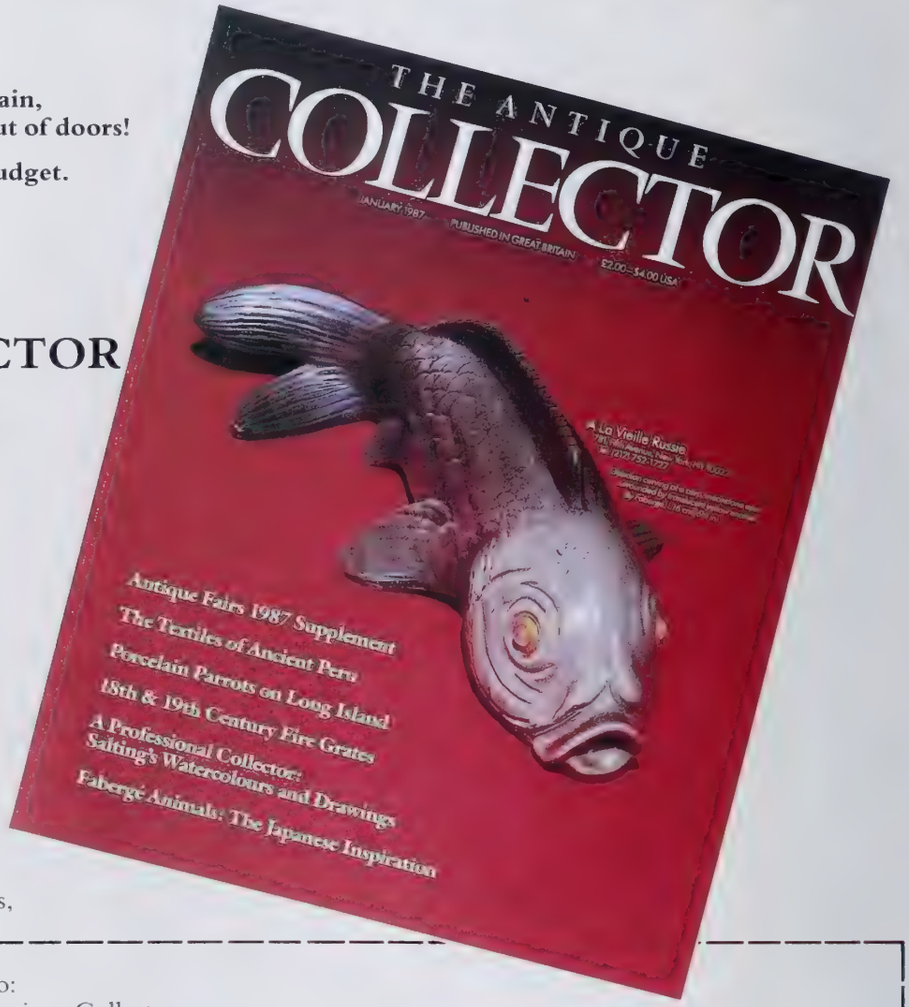

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THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING; CERAMICS; AMERICANA

Duncan Phyfe tables may top the list of Americana at Christie's New York, October 1.

COURTESY CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK

There are literally dozens of important sales this month. Even using uncharacteristic self-discipline, I still cannot pare the list to below some twenty. Here, then, is a sampling of the very best.

On the fifth, **Christie's London** gives expression to a lovely conceit: an entire sale of **finger rings.** Being held simultaneously with an exhibit at Christie's entitled "The Power of Love: Six Centuries of Diamond Betrothal Rings" (running through the fourteenth), the sale presents a much richer palette, with examples that range from Greco-Roman to modern, many with important historical associations. Over in Knightsbridge, at **Bonhams,** on the same day, is a sale featuring a great collection of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century treen, those fantastic little carved wooden wonders that delight and astonish.

Speaking of astonishment, if you think prices went through the roof in Moscow (and they did) at the pioneering Sotheby's auction in July of works largely by contemporary Russian artists, fasten your seat belts. On the sixth, **Christie's London** offers **imperial and postrevolutionary Russian art.** This is not their first undertaking in this field, but it is certainly their most impressive. This panorama of Russian craft and design over three centuries ranges from eighteenth-century imperial furniture, watercolors, and prints to more-contemporary artworks, books, and theater material—virtually all inventoried. The real headliner, though, may be the special offering at Guernsey's, on the twenty-second and twenty-third in **New York,** of some 600 works by contemporary Soviet artists, the first ever outside the Soviet Union and some two years in the making. The sale will include paintings, sculpture, and photographs by name artists and some not yet known in the West.

Enthusiasts of Japanese material have a double treat in store. On the seventh in **New York, Christie's** presents the **Hyde collection of Japanese books and manuscripts,** clearly one of the most impressive Japanese libraries ever sold at auction. Then, on the eighteenth at **Christie's London,** will be the second session of the smashing **Bushell collection of netsuke.** The first sale, last October, brought £813,417, and Japanese buyers have become increasingly active since then, so all bets are off on this one.

Exotic sixteenth-century Persian miniatures, Christie's London.

Also in **London,** on the eleventh, **Christie's** will offer fourteen miniatures from a celebrated Persian manuscript, the exotically illustrated *Shahnameh* (Book of Kings). Seven folios from this work realized £785,000 at Christie's in 1976. The following day, **Sotheby's London** will hold a sale of **Islamic art, carpets, and textiles** that will be particularly strong in Persian metalwork and rare, richly decorated Damascene tiles.

Ceramics are all the rage this month. In **London** on the third and the tenth, **Christie's** features a broad range of **Continental** and **British ceramics,** respectively, with the **Sotheby's** somewhat more precious **early-English and Continental ceramics** sale on the eighteenth. The next day, **Sotheby's** experiments with a whimsical but arresting sale of **ceramics by twentieth-century artists.** In **New York,** where there has been a consistently strong market for ceramic material, **Sotheby's** presents **English pottery and porcelain,** including some 100 lots of early Worcester, on the twenty-sixth. Since the market for Occidental wares has not benefited from recent spasms of Arab and Japanese buying, it will be interesting to see whether the unexpected softness in buying during London's big June ceramics sales was a fluke or a signal.

October's largest thematic concentration will be six heavy-duty

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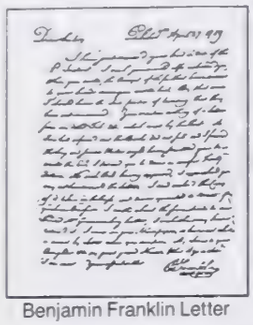

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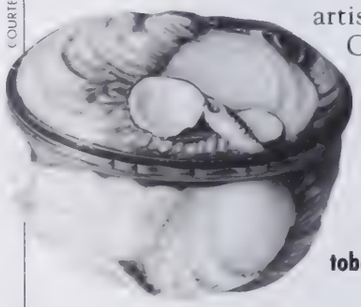
AUCTIONS

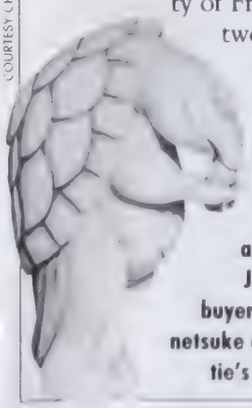
offerings of **Americana.** The action begins on the first in **New York** with **American decorative arts** at **Christie's,** where a virtuoso suite of three Duncan Phyfe tables should walk away with bidding honors, although twenty lots of outstanding painted furniture, both formal and folk, could be record setters as well. Those who prefer their painting on canvas should be at **William Doyle Galleries** on the fifth for the sale of solid and largely affordable **American paintings,** many by second-tier artists (Bricher, Cooper, Evans, Fuentes) whose market recognition is just beginning to take off. The following day in **San Francisco, Butterfield & Butterfield** presents its eighth sale of **California paintings,** a somewhat self-consciously and loosely defined category in which Butterfield has virtually no competition. These sales typically are chock-full of pleasing period and genre paintings by artists perhaps more familiar in professional than in popular circles, although many do not go cheap.



COURTESY SOTHEBY'S LONDON

Conchological snuffbox, ca. 1750, at the Sotheby's ceramics sale, October 18 in London.

Back in **New York,** on the twenty-second, **Sotheby's** has **American folk art and furniture.** The biggest news in Americana this season, however, may well be a few scraps of paper from the Civil War period. On the sixth, New York's **Swann Galleries** could have a real sleeper in the manuscript draft of the Treaty of Friendship, of 1861, between the then swaggering young Confederacy and the western Seminole nation. Envious eyes will surely be watching on the twenty-sixth, when **Sotheby's** puts on the block a truly extraordinary lot: Robert E. Lee's poignant note penciled to Ulysses S. Grant the morning of April 9, 1865, asking formally for "a suspension of hostilities pending the discussions of the terms of surrender." The note was sent through lines commanded by Gen. Edward O. C. Ord, whose own annotations—"the within read—acted on . . . men at rest—firing stopped"—symbolically marked war's end.



COURTESY CHRISTIE'S LONDON

All bets are off as Japanese buyers bid for netsuke at Christie's London.

In a similar vein, on the eighteenth through the twentieth, **Christie's New York** continues its dispersal of the stupefying **Doheny library.** This session features a large group of fore-edge paintings and exquisite bindings, along with top-rate English and American literary texts, including a potpourri of goodies from Mark Twain's personal library.

The next day the action shifts to **Christie's East,** for the dispersal of some 250 lots from the **estate of Cecil B. DeMille.** Having endured as a child a number of DeMille's biblical and other heroic extravaganzas, I was relieved to note elements of fine taste reflected, for example, in some of the good English-style furniture removed from his Beverly Hills home. There will also be a number of personal items relating to his films. Less glitzy than some other recent "celeb" sales, it should still provoke a hearty dose of nostalgia.

COURTESY CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK

The extraordinary *Tale of Genji* from 1594, at Christie's on October 7.

Finally, there is a glorious sale at **Christie's New York** on the fifteenth: **French furniture and decoration** from the Groves collection. The pieces are largely from the Louis XV and XVI periods. Many bear impressive pedigrees (Boudin, Heurtaut, Iacob, Lacroix, Lepine) and should fetch equally impressive prices. This could be an important test of a market that has not been a leading indicator for some years.

—James R. Lyons

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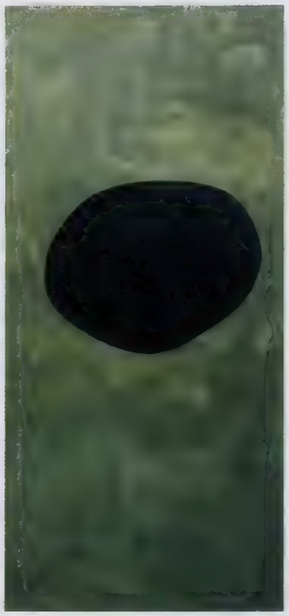

B

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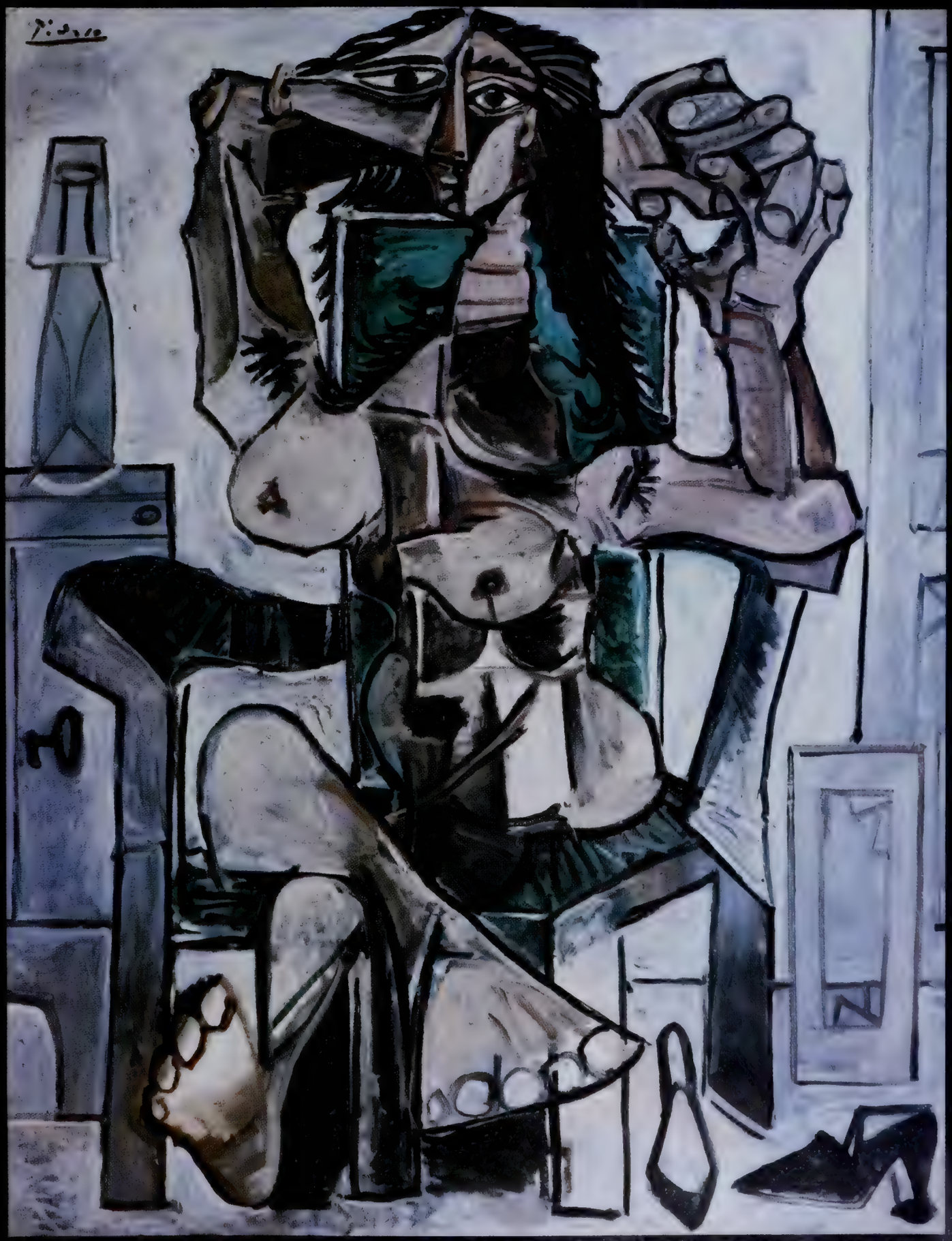

Pablo Picasso, *Femme Nue Assise*, signed, oil on canvas, 1959, 57½ by 45 inches. Auction: Thursday, November 10 at 7 pm.

SOTHEBY'S
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Impressionist and Modern Drawings and Watercolors
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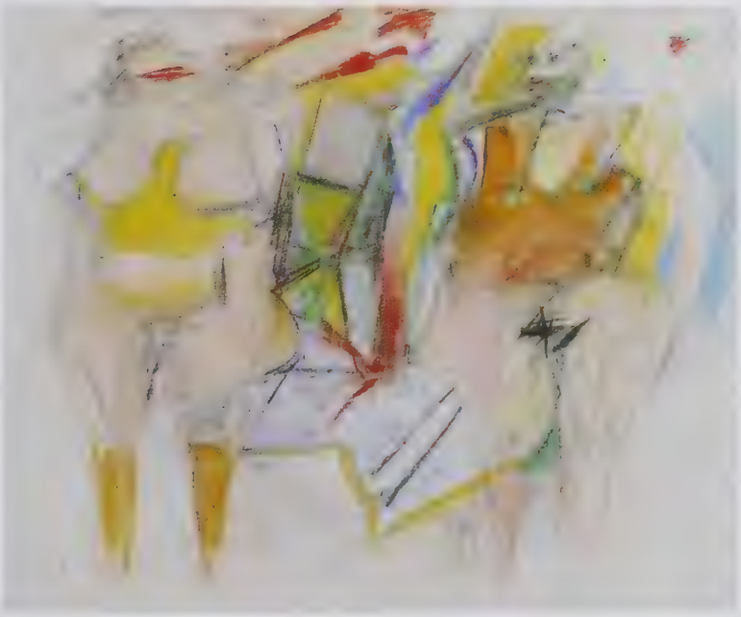

Edgar Degas, *Le Baisser du Rideau,* 1880, signed, pastel on joined paper, 21¼ by 29⅛ inches, to be included in the auction of Impressionist and Modern Paintings and Sculpture, Part I.

Willem de Kooning, *Two Women,* signed and dated *54,* pastel, charcoal and pencil on paper, 21⅝ by 26¼ inches, to be included in the auction of Contemporary Art, Part I.

Henry Moore, *Seated Family Group,* signed and dated *44,* watercolor, white wax crayon, black crayon over pencil on paper, 4½ by 7 inches, to be included in the auction of Impressionist and Modern Drawings and Watercolors.

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THE HIGH, CLEAR ART OF JEFFREY GALL

BY RICHARD DYER

VOLKER KOEPKE

At last, here is a countertenor who can perform the dazzling roles Handel wrote for castrati.

Jeffrey Gall cannot say he was not warned. America's leading countertenor had always known he has an unusual upward extension in his lyric-tenor voice, but it never crossed his mind that he might cultivate it. When he would flip over the top of his usual range during an exercise in a singing lesson, his teacher would urge caution: "You don't want to do *that!* You're going to sound like a countertenor!"

That was a dozen years ago, when Jeffrey Gall was a graduate student in Slavic languages and literature at Yale and taking voice lessons on the side. Although in England in the years after World War II Alfred Deller had brought the countertenor voice back into prominence after centuries of dormancy, this sound and style of singing was unusual in America, even in the early seventies—and perhaps it was something to warn a young singer about. But with the extraordinary explosion of interest in early music and in baroque music performed on original instruments, the demand has exploded for countertenors—especially since the baroque period's most original instrument, the castrato, is no longer available.

By the late 1970s Gall had trained his countertenor [illegible] and was appearing in leading roles in baroque opera at Milan's La Scala, La Fenice, in Venice, the Edinburgh Festival, and the San Francisco and Chicago Lyric operas. And with the current production of Handel's *Giulio Cesare* (September 27 to October 22), Gall becomes the first countertenor to perform at the Metropolitan Opera, which holds 4,000. Normally countertenors stick to more-intimate venues. "I guess they did wonder whether it would be possible to use a countertenor in a theater that size," Gall says. "But the issue is not so much the size of the house as the acoustic, how much you can hear yourself on the stage. If you hear a report back from the house, you can adjust. If you can't hear—well, you are at the mercy of your technique and your better judgment."

The composer Sir Michael Tippett, who was instrumental in launching Alfred Deller on his career a half century ago, found the countertenor voice a "peculiarly musical sound because almost no emotional irrelevancies distract us from the absolutely pure musical quality of the production." Tippett was thinking about such countertenors as Deller, who excel on the domestic scale of lute song. Jeffrey Gall is the first countertenor to demonstrate that the abstract sound the composer admired can also be specifically dramatic and highly theatrical.

Among today's countertenors Gall is unique in commanding a heroic virtuoso technique; he can perform the great operatic roles Handel created for the castrato singers of the day—and sing them on the same stage with powerhouse mainstream singers like Marilyn Horne. For years it was necessary to put female mezzo-sopranos into trousers for these parts, or to resort to the expedient of assigning baritones to sing them an octave down. But Gall has the range (up to A in the soprano clef), the power, the technique, and the musical and dramatic imagination to meet any challenge Handel set, and his sound and

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stage appearance are unequivocally masculine. He can move with grave, natural dignity through stately period productions; yet he has also been a central figure in all three of Peter Sellars's contemporary Handel stagings. In *Orlando,* Gall was a contemporary hero-warrior, an astronaut (clad in an ecstatic-orange jumpsuit); in *Giulio Cesare* Gall's characterization of the Roman conqueror was based on Sellars's observations of President Reagan.

One of the most striking moments in the Sellars *Cesare* came during an aria set at a summit conference. Gall scarcely moved as he sat at one end of the negotiating table. Yet Caesar's blandishing public manner gradually gave way to expose steely resolve; the ballpoint pens in his hands became nuclear warheads. Caesar's next aria, in contrast, was physically strenuous and showed off Gall's athletic agility. As Caesar thought of Cleopatra, he could not contain himself. Each position of repose he sought immediately propelled him into some stage-spanning streak of action. The soprano Susan Larson, Gall's frequent costar recalls his panting offstage after this aria. "We're like the Lunts," Gall said. "Growing old together onstage—all in one night."

Gall has worked very consciously to make his singing dramatic. "My voice, actually, is very common," he says. "There is an obvious register break, and usually people with that problem don't get very far. But it seemed to me that if I could exploit the registers of my voice artfully, I could do exciting things. I would read through baroque music, and things that seemed unfriendly were things to work on—I used that as a gauge. As my technique improved, so did my ideas about how to sing the music. Your sense of what you *can* do affects what you *want* to do. Fortunately the baroque is about drama."

PETER KRUPENYE

Under Peter Sellars, Caesar played as Reagan.

Gall has had teachers, but he is always teaching himself, in part by listening to what is going on in the voices of people he works with. "I can't tell you how much I admire Marilyn Horne—the way she can *move* her voice and at the same time keep it full-bodied and balanced. The sound of her voice in certain pieces, in certain ranges, is something I have tried to emulate, but more than that, it's a question of intensity. We don't have the same style, obviously, but her kind of intensity is what I would like to be able to project."

Jeffrey Gall, now thirty-eight, says he has been singing all his life. "People are always asking me if I was a boy soprano. Well, I was a boy and I was a soprano and I sang, but it wasn't that big an issue." He grew up in Lakewood, Ohio, not far from Cleveland, and he took piano lessons and learned about music in school and in church. "Once in a while we would sing something by Handel, more often late-nineteenth-century imitations of Handel. By fifteen I was very interested in baroque music—it was the age of Nonesuch Records, after all. I had a high-school teacher who told me I might make a career in music, but that seemed impractical. So then I did something *really* impractical. I

What Do Countertenors Do?

Even today some people snigger at the sound of a countertenor and want to ask questions of an intimate nature. Alfred Deller, the first great modern countertenor, answered them by growing a beard and producing a son, also a countertenor. The sniggering is curiously out of place. The countertenor sound is a staple of barbershop-quartet singing, and pop stars as diverse as the Beach Boys and Cliff Richard croon in a higher range than any classical countertenor uses.

There is a lot of confusion about what a countertenor is because at least two different kinds of singer called countertenor perform music composed for even more kinds of vocalist. A countertenor today is expected to sing music composed over a span of 250 years for alto (and sometimes even soprano) castrato, for female alto, and for high male tenor, not to mention music Bach composed for the unbroken voice of the boy alto and music Purcell and Handel wrote for male alto.

Some countertenors are tenors with an anomalously high range; they sound like very high Irish tenors. Russell Oberlin, the most prominent American countertenor in the generation before Jeffrey Gall, was a singer of this type. Others are singers who have cultivated the technique of singing in falsetto; the word is a bit misleading. There is nothing false or unnatural about the falsetto voice. The baroque Italian Fabbri once defined an unnatural [illegible] Falsetto [illegible] of the full length of the [illegible]

technique has often been compared to the technique of string playing; when the fingers "stop" a string, or shorten its length, the pitch of the string rises.

Some countertenors make a point of never leaving the falsetto register. Others, like Gall, freely move between the falsetto and the so-called natural voice, in his instance a light tenor. The great composer Henry Purcell may have been a singer of Gall's type; he performed both as a countertenor and as a bass.

The church's long opposition to women's voices in the service meant that falsetto singing became a highly developed art; the most famous falsettists were the Spaniards in the papal chapel in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries falsetto singing was also much prized, although it was displaced for a time by the infatuation with the art of the castrato. Later composers used falsetto for comic or grotesque effect. Verdi's Falstaff bursts into falsetto, and so does Marcello in Puccini's *La Bohème;* the mad Doctor in Alban Berg's *Wozzeck* shrieks in falsetto. After Deller brought the voice back into prominence, composers, particularly in England, began to write for countertenor again—Benjamin Britten wrote the part of Oberon in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for Deller, and Sir Michael Tippett includes a role for countertenor in his opera *The Ice Break;* more recently, in this country, Philip Glass composed the title role in *Akhnaten* for countertenor.

Alfred Deller's most beautiful records are the early ones, made in the late forties and early fifties. HMV Treasury issued a collection of them a while back. It may be hard to find now, because it has not jumped to CD yet. The most accessible Deller performances are now on Harmonia Mundi CDs. They were made late in his life and document the voice in decline, although the musical and interpretive impulses are still vital. Paul Esswood and James Bowman have been the principal British countertenors in the generation after Deller. Both have recorded extensively, but their hooty singing in some strange, mono-vowel language is an acquired taste. The younger Michael Chance, who can be heard on the Archiv recording of Bach's Mass in B Minor conducted by John Eliot Gardiner, is a beautiful singer. In America, Gall's chief rival is the accomplished Drew Minter, who in a sense has played the warm, eloquent Tebaldi to Gall's fiery Callas. Minter sings an engaging collection of Handel arias conducted by Nicholas McGegan on Harmonia Mundi.

Because most recording activity is based in Europe, Gall has been underrecorded. He is, however, the chief point of interest in the Smithsonian Institution's recording of Handel's *Messiah.* He also appears on Joshua Rifkin's recording of Bach's *Magnificat,* on Pro Arte. In Cavalli's opera *Xerse* (Harmonia Mundi) he can be heard in instructive juxtaposition with today's most recorded countertenor, the Belgian René Jacobs—a formidable artist, but not in Gall's class.

—*R.D.*

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majored in Slavic languages at Princeton and went on to graduate school at Yale."

All through his student years Gall continued to sing; at Princeton he appeared in the lyric-tenor role of Narciso in Rossini's *Il Turco in Italia.* While at Yale he went to audition for a job in a church choir in Southport, Connecticut. It turned out they were looking for not a tenor but a countertenor. Gall thought to himself, "Well, I'm here anyway. Why not try it?" He got the job.

Before long he had quit school and moved to New York, where he had already become a figure in the emerging early-music scene; he sang, toured, and recorded with the Waverly Consort; he still considers this a valuable performing experience. But within a year, he left. "It was a rat race," he says. "The work was underpaid, and there were few prospects. The only work for countertenors was in early-music ensembles. It is a wonderful repertory, but I already knew it was not the best one for my voice. That's when I decided to move to Boston, because I knew Boston had been performing Handel in one way or another since his lifetime."

Another attraction of Boston was the presence of a Yale Slavicist friend, Karen Rosenberg, whom he married in 1978; she is now a writer specializing in cultural and political subjects, and the Galls continue to make their home in Boston. "Within two weeks of moving, I had sung for everyone in town, and I had a dozen jobs. I don't know of another city where such a musical life would have been possible. It was one giant, ideal conservatory situation—all the time I was working in different repertories and with people who had different ideas about interpretation."

In his first Boston years Gall was a startling presence. His voice even then was unusually colorful and powerful for a countertenor; his languages were superb—he *used* texts instead of emitting them in the International Phonetic Alphabet—and his musicianship was striking over a wide range of styles. He once collaborated with Susan Larson in an evening of American pop songs from the thirties; Gall sang in a buoyant tenor that recalled Fred Astaire.

Sometimes, though, his technique could be ungainly. The "break" between the lower and upper registers of his voice was very pronounced, and Gall could sound like a provincial Italian mezzo grinding out Santuzza in Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana,* except that the mezzo was improvising impeccable baroque ornamentation. And there were setbacks as Gall consolidated his voice and technique. He did not make it very far in an important voice competition in Holland, for example. "I was possessed by the need to rehearse, and shredded my vocal chords before the concert."

Even after he had "arrived" and was making his debut at the Piccola Scala, in Handel's *Ariodante,* his voice unstrung an Italian critic. "He was in such a froth at the very idea of a countertenor on the La Scala stage that he suggested I should undergo a baroque operation—using baroque surgical instruments!" But Gall considers his Italian engagements crucial to his development. "You can't substitute anything for experience in the country that speaks the language you sing."

Over the years Gall has built a huge repertoire of music by Bach, Purcell, Monteverdi, Scarlatti, Vivaldi, and contemporary composers, but at the heart of it lies the music of Handel—he has sung in sixteen operas and oratorios by Handel, sometimes in multiple roles (he has sung two leading parts in *Orlando,* and Ptolemy will be his third part in *Giulio Cesare*). "Somehow I have managed to mold myself, trim my corners, so I'm fitted to these Handel roles. I find myself emotionally engaged with these pieces, and that really helps the singing. I feel a connection with this music that comes out in the color and intensity of my voice."

A COUNTERTENOR AT LA SCALA? ONE CRITIC WAS ALMOST READY TO KILL.

Performing his Handel roles in several styles, Gall has learned from all of them. "In period productions of the wigs-and-candelabra sort you have to be careful not to get lost in the technique of baroque gesture. But there are some people, Shirley Wynne, for one, who work very intelligently within the period style. She is a choreographer, and she finds evolving postures and sets of gestures that carry you through a role. With Peter Sellars, you find the same kind of attention to detail. The wonderful thing with Peter is the huge vocabulary of gesture—from Oriental theater, from television and the movies, to the stage, and back. Strangely, that takes you right to the center of the changing character you are trying to project."

Gall knows there will be a lot of Handel in his future. Sellars considers him one of the great performers of our day and at various times has announced his intention to do at least four additional Handel operas with him. "Handel is for me a great boon both technically and artistically," Gall says. "It has made me a better singer and better-equipped to handle other kinds of music as well. Now my dream is to sing the *Orfeo* of Gluck. It's a different style, a different aesthetic. I've been working around it very cautiously for a couple of years, and it has humbled, amazed, and delighted me. But Handel will always be there. I have found the most comfortable repertory for me, and the most rewarding. Thank God it's a huge repertory." □

Gall in a wig [illegible] *ando,* with Valerie Masterson, San Francisco Opera, 1985.

Richard Dyer is the music critic of the Boston Globe.

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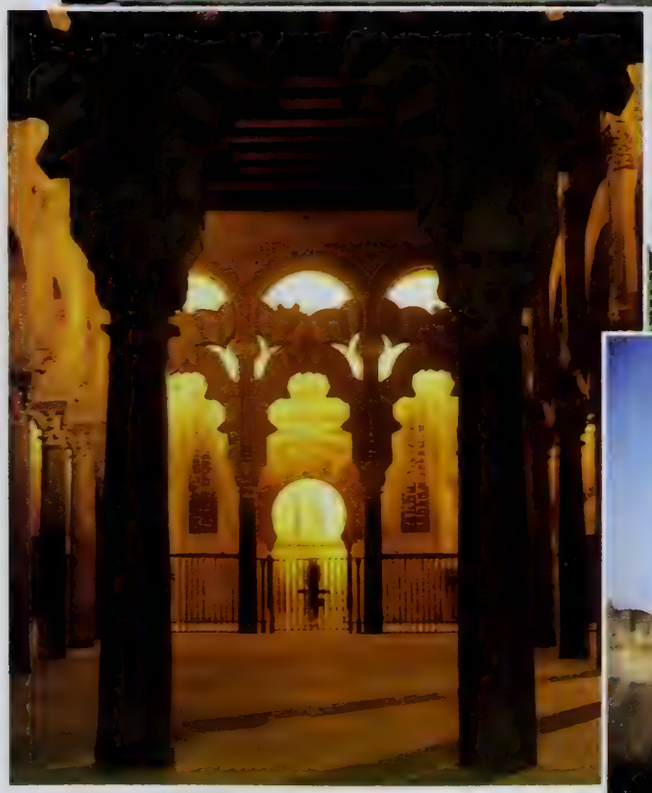

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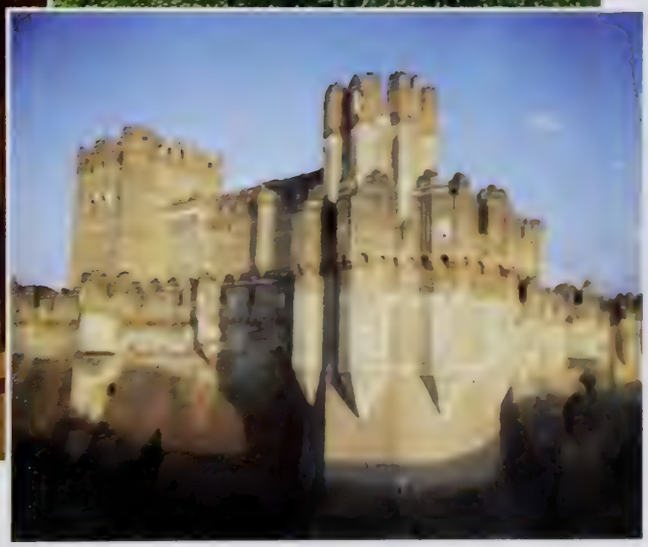

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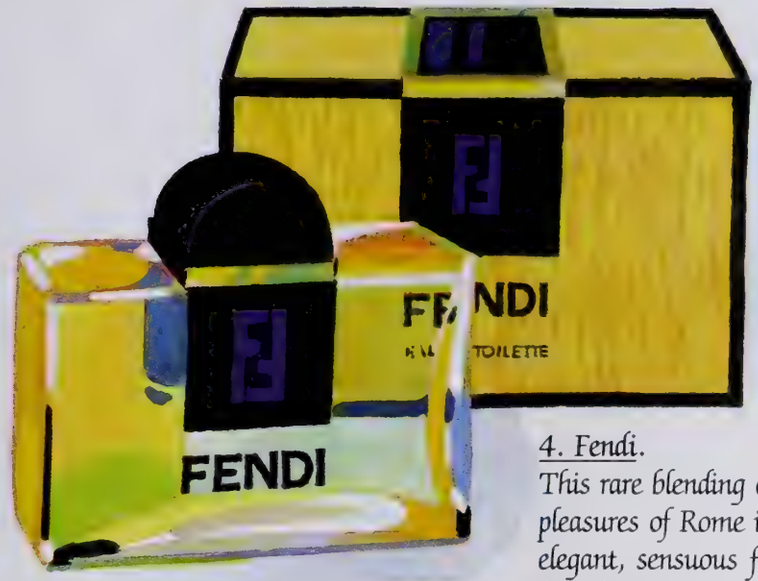

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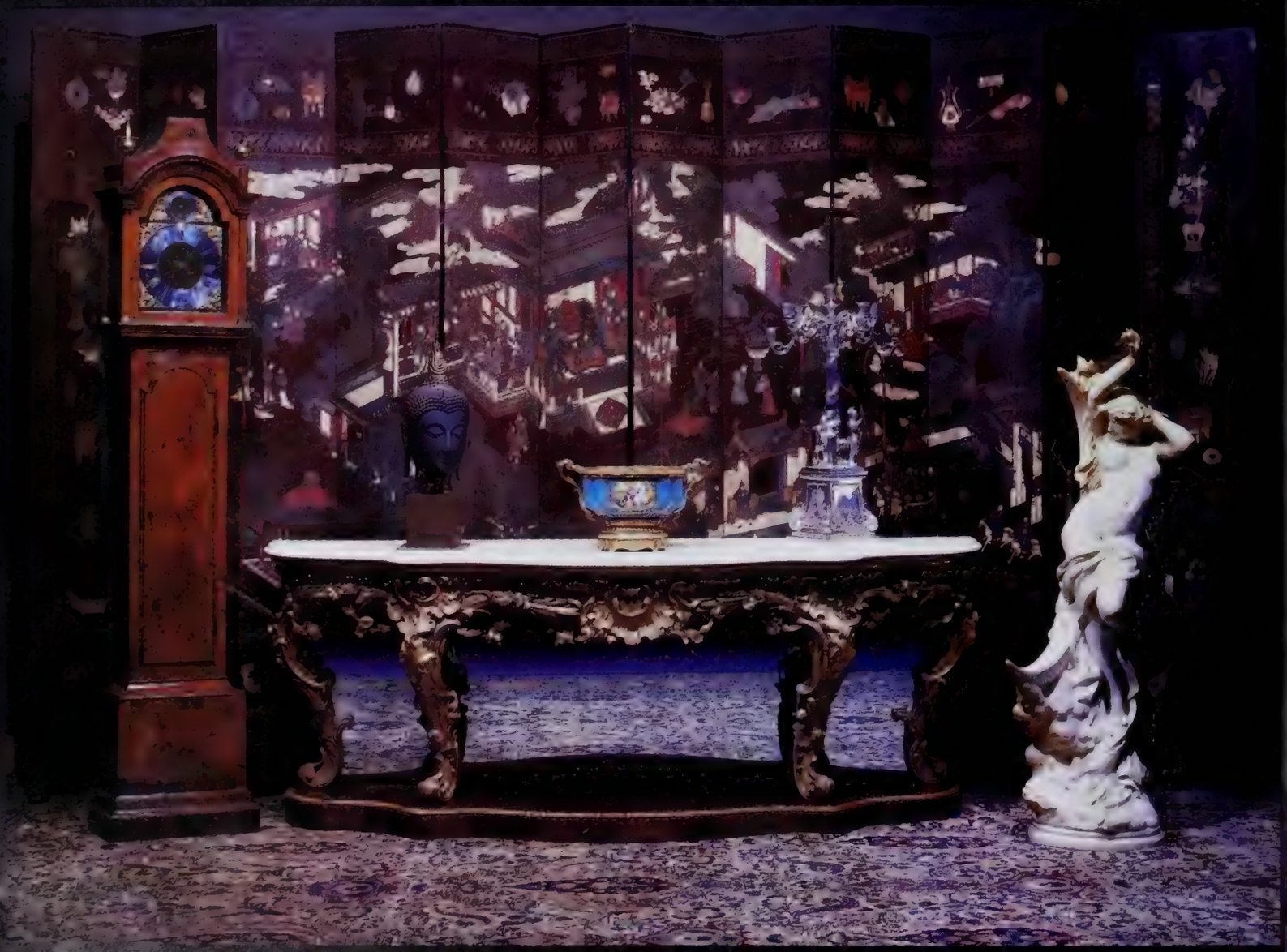

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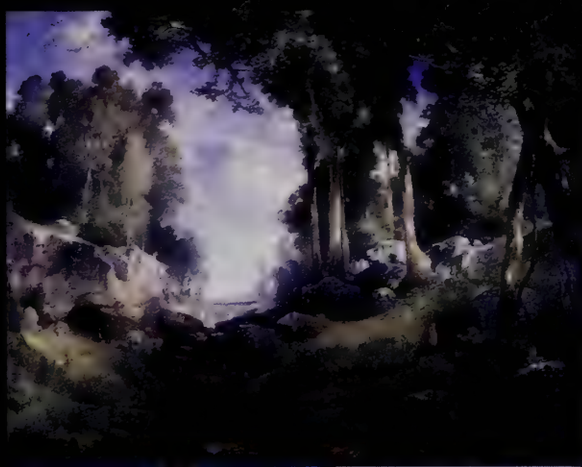

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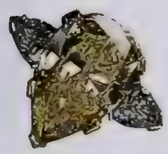


TIFFANY ON TOP

Amazingly, the old store has come back to life

William Chaney, Tiffany's CEO, surrounded by yellow and white diamonds: a ring, a choker, and a stunning canary diamond, the whopper known as the Tiffany Diamond.

"Tiffany," says John Loring, its design director, "is a national institution as well as a store," and who is going to argue the point? A year ago this institution reached its one hundred fiftieth birthday, and it was widely celebrated. No one, after all, has ever written a book or made a movie called *Breakfast at Cartier's*. Which gifts do you open first if you're a bride? The ones that come in those simple but unmistakable blue Tiffany boxes. Tiffany is both a store and a benchmark of American culture. Its jewelry was for decades the standard against which other jewelry was measured. Most sterling-silver baby cups are stamped by machine out of disks of silver. Tiffany still spins them by hand on a lathe. Tiffany bespeaks quality. It is where your family heirlooms—silver candelabra, rococo bread baskets, tea sets, services for thirty—probably came from.

A remarkable business recovery was also being celebrated. It was only four years ago that the current CEO of Tiffany, William R. Chaney, bought the store away from Avon Products Inc., purveyors of cosmetics and costume jewelry to middle America. Having bought Tiffany in 1979, Avon failed completely to understand what it was about. Three years ago the store was still operating at a loss. Now its revenues are growing at the phenomenal rate of 27 percent a year. It is opening a new branch every year in the United States and another abroad. Its new perfume, Tiffany, is a hit. It is moving back into leather goods and introducing scarves. The customers lost during the Avon years are returning. No one could have predicted—and no one did—that the more or less unknown quantity, William Chaney, or the former New York bureau chief of *Architectural Digest* John Loring would turn Tiffany around—practically overnight.

Avon had bought Tiffany from Walter Hoving, who himself bought it from the heirs of the Tiffany family twenty-four years earlier, in 1955. At that time Tiffany was a stuffy outfit whose president, Louis de Bèbian Moore, thought profits should go not into growth and development but into government bonds. Tiffany was the last of the major jewelers to deal in cultured pearls, it paid no attention to new design, and by the time Walter Hoving took over it had begun to lose money.

One of the first things he did was to hold Tiffany's first-ever storewide clearance sale. He cut the price of a nineteenth-century sterling tea set from $32,000 to $12,000, reduced an emerald-and-diamond brooch from $52,000 to $29,700, and made news. He brought in Van Day Truex, the retired head of the Parsons School of Design, to run the design department. He lured Jean Schlumberger, one of the century's premier jewelry designers, to the Tiffany mezzanine. Above all, he imposed his own taste on the store: "I had worked for Macy's and

By Anthony Brandt

Montgomery Ward. And in those stores the policy was to give the customer what he wanted, to suit his tastes. Now, with Tiffany's, I had a chance to give the customers what *I* wanted, to suit *my* taste." His taste was well formed. By the 1960s Tiffany was profitable again. An innovative retailer, Hoving made the names of the two jewelry designers he had brought in, Angela Cummings and Elsa Peretti, into household words. "There is no such thing as good taste," he once said, "only bad taste, and taste." Hoving had taste and he had the social connections essential to success in the high jewelry business. The store prospered.

By 1978, when he was eighty years old, Hoving was ready to sell. Not, however, to just anyone. "I'm sure he could have gone to many retail organizations and found eager acquirers," says William Chaney, who was then an executive of Avon. "But he didn't want Tiffany to become one of several companies in a large chain. He felt Tiffany could maintain its individuality best in a totally unrelated environment." Such as that of a large company like Avon, which was looking for diversification. David Mitchell, its CEO, and Walter Hoving were introduced, and a deal was struck. In 1979, Tiffany & Co. became a subsidiary of Avon Products.

It was a big mistake on both sides. Tiffany had always catered to the elite and sold only the best. Avon was a mass-market operation insensitive to the incompatibility between quality and quantity. The public perception of the deal was unfavorable. In John Loring's words, "Suddenly the public says, 'Oh, my God, Avon has bought Tiffany; look, they're selling seven-dollar wineglasses'—a perfectly creditable wineglass that was Mr. Hoving's greatest loss leader." Nothing had changed except public perception. Avon made a point of leaving Tiffany management alone, and the store went on pretty much as before. But the public was not buying it. "Tiffany had lost most of its personality," says the designer Mario Buatta. "It had become a corporate entity." This was an unpromising marriage.

To make matters worse, Angela Cummings left Tiffany in a small storm of negative publicity. She had lost one battle to Elsa Peretti, who had the exclusive right at Tiffany to sign silver jewelry, and she had lost another battle for display space, to Paloma Picasso. [illegible] John Loring brought in as Tiffany's third name-jewelry designer [illegible] Schlumberger). Many people [illegible] ing Picasso into the store [illegible] aunt and

From Tiffany catalogs and ads: selections of the store's choicest wares.

Exquisite designs by Jean Schlumberger.
A. "Pomme" ear-clips of cultured pearls and diamonds set in eighteen karat gold and platinum, $7,925. B. "Leaf" ear-clips of black and white cultured pearls and diamonds set in eighteen karat gold and platinum, $6,825. C. "Flowers" llar of diamonds set in platinum with cultured pearls and eighteen karat gold, $93,500.

PALOMA PICASSO'S JEWELRY is remarkable for its dramatic sculptural quality. The bold strokes and silhouette [illegible] designs add a spirited contemporary [illegible] the Tiffany Touch.

A. "Loop" ear-clips in sterling silver $85 [illegible] eighteen karat gold $975
B. "Loop" choker in sterling silver $2,600
C. "Double X" bracelet in sterling silver $1,200
D. "X" ear-clips in sterling silver $175 [illegible] eighteen karat gold $750
E. "Scribble" pin in sterling silver $195
F. "Love and Kisses" pin in sterling silver $185

Designs copyrighted by Paloma Picasso.

To place an order or ask about an item in the catalogue, please call 800-526-0649 between 8:00 and 7:00 EST weekdays, 9:30 and 5:30 EST Saturdays, and 12:30 and 5:30 Sunday

that Loring himself actually designs much of her jewelry. "When the three ladies were here all at the same time," says Loring, "I mean, this does lead to in-house jealousies and it's very difficult to convince all three that they are being given equal treatment." While Loring was trying to make Paloma Picasso a star, they probably were *not* being given equal treatment. Exit Angela Cummings.

What else could go wrong? How about a management in turmoil? By the time Walter Hoving retired, at the end of 1980, David Mitchell was beginning to force Avon's mass-market mentality on Tiffany. Harry Platt took over from Hoving. He had the right social connections, but he was a jeweler and a merchandiser, not an administrator. He was out in less than a year. With these two men gone, something essential had disappeared. "I think with fine jewelry Tiffany does not have anymore the clout it used to have," says Pedro Boregaard, a former Tiffany jewelry maker who now has his own shop in New York. "You have to have a certain social clout to get those rich clients in. Changing over to Avon, I think they lost a lot."

And indeed the elite clientele left. David Mitchell's mass-market mind had conceived an expansion plan "completely incommensurate," says John Loring, "with the production of very high quality handcrafted merchandise." William Chaney says it was a "cookie-cutter type of expansion, ten stores a year." Morale at Tiffany had never been so low.

The marriage fell apart in 1984, when a new CEO at Avon Products put Tiffany up for sale. Avon had paid about $100 million for the store; the asking price now was $180 million. The Wall Street analysts laughed. They thought Tiffany was worth about $130 million tops. In the eight months ending September 30, 1984, Tiffany lost $11.7 million on gross sales of $70 million. A New Jersey mail-order outfit disdainfully offered $16 million for the retail and mail-order business, leaving to Avon the real estate and the Tiffany Diamond, the gorgeous yellow stone on permanent display in the Fifth Avenue store. "They can call it the Avon Diamond," they said. Donald Trump, who already owned the air rights above the

store, which abuts Trump Tower, made an offer and then withdrew it. In the end William Chaney put together a group of investors and bankers and paid $135.5 million for Tiffany & Co. He had been running it for Avon since the beginning of the year and had been watching it from his seat on the board since 1979. Now he owned it.

The Avon executive style, well known in the cosmetics industry for its blandness, is firmly imprinted on William Chaney: unfailingly polite, pleasant, even colorless. Asked why he wanted Tiffany, he replies, "Well, you get caught up in the tradition, and from a professional, managerial, entrepreneur-type standpoint, there couldn't be a more exciting opportunity—Tiffany with its tradition, but with its problems that required some dramatic redirection and leadership." He says all this without displaying any excitement at all.

But the leadership must be there. Sales have almost doubled since 1984, from a little over $100 million to $230 million in 1987. Chaney has taken the company public, raising capital for the slow but steady increase in the number of stores. He has paid back the investment bankers. The man has been lucky, to be sure: he bought Tiffany at a time when the stock market was about to take off. But even after the crash of October 1987, Tiffany

Pepper mill or peridot necklace, it's wrapped in a blue box. The ring ad dates from 1968.

TIFFANY'S TOPS—A SAMPLER

Tiffany man's watch with Florentine-finish gold bracelet, $2,150.
Crocodile evening bag, $1,300.
Elsa Peretti's 26" gold-mesh chain, $585.
Schlumberger "twist" bracelet, 18-k gold, $8,500.
Nymphenburg tureen, $10,000.
"Tiffany Vine" scarf, $150.
"Chrysanthemum" sterling-silver flatware (reproducing an original Tiffany pattern of 1880). Service for twelve, $4,620
Schlumberger 18-k gold "leaf" brooch, pavé dia-
[illegible] sterling
[illegible] 100.
sterling-silver [illegible]

THEO WESTENBERGER/SYGMA

Three's a crowd: Elsa Peretti, Angela Cummings (who left Tiffany), Paloma Picasso. Below: From the "Art Nouveau" collection.

prospered. In the period from November 1 through Christmas, sales rose by 21 percent over the same period the previous year. The jewelry industry as a whole is growing—14 percent in 1987, says Chaney—but Tiffany is outgrowing it. In 1987 its growth rate was 10 percent higher than the industry's. Only the two-year-old London store is not meeting expectations.

Is it indeed leadership? Is it clever marketing? Or has Tiffany, in losing its old elite clientele, inadvertently discovered the secret of survival in the modern upscale market? Pedro Boregaard thinks that, with the store's expansion into new lines of merchandise and new stores worldwide, Tiffany has lost "a certain mystique and exclusivity." He calls it a "very expensive gift shop." Another longtime shopper there would agree. "There is less variety," she says, "especially in porcelain and silver. They have fewer patterns today."

It is true that Tiffany is no longer the kind of store it once was. But that only makes Mario Buatta happy. "I think they've gone over the border from being a very conservative kind of store. Now they've become a little bit more elastic, and they've got things in there that really relate to a lot more people. I think in any kind of business like that you can't expect one customer to support you and keep you in business." Buatta goes on to conclude, "Of all the old firms, who has survived? Tiffany."

The days have gone when a man like Walter Hoving could impose his taste on customers. This has become an age when a horde of people, too newly rich to have much idea what taste is, are looking for certifiable good taste, things acknowledged to be of the highest quality, the best design, things that everybody approves of, things that are *safe*. The Tiffany stores are full of them, and Tiffany & Co. is growing fat selling them. Says Buatta, "The insulated, elitist types who think Tiffany is their store—they're not going to keep it alive. Tiffany had to go out to the marketplace and get the people with new money to spend. A whole new generation, a new world." □

Anthony Brandt, a frequent contributor, wrote about restaurant design for Connoisseur's *April issue.*

The Last Laugh by Joseph Heller

When Rembrandt's idiosyncratic painting Aristotle Contemplating the Bust of Homer, *of 1653, was sold at auction in November 1961, fetching $2,300,000, the world of fine art and museums moved into a new era. Art prices began their climb into the stratosphere; vast segments of the public, who had cringed at the thought of penetrating the dingy halls of an art museum, rushed to the Met to see what all the money and hype was about; and the art museum entered the world of populism, education for the masses, and the accelerated acquisition of grand masterpieces.*

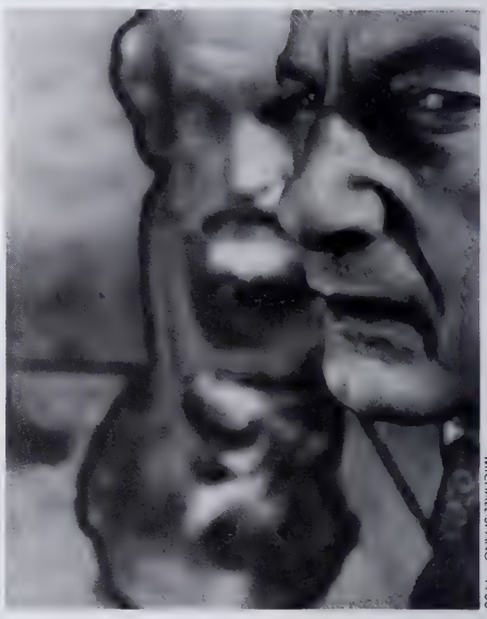
For all that, the best thing Aristotle's *purchase did for the world of culture was that it inspired Joseph Heller, twenty-five years later, to write a major novel about the painting. In the book, he tells us more about the illusion of art, the deviousness of artists, the carelessness of art collectors, and the opera buffa of art museums in the modern age than an army of social historians could.*

Rembrandt self-portrait (1635–36).

Picture This *does for the universe of art and museums what* Catch-22 *did for war. "My interest in painting," says Heller, "was primarily a literary one. I chose the painting of Aristotle as an avenue for moving where I wanted to go through history. I gave Aristotle a consciousness, because through him I wanted to reflect on the dreadful similarities between three democratic societies in history"—the terrible, warmongering society of fifth- and fourth-century Athens, when Aristotle lived; seventeenth-century Holland, with its explosion of petit bourgeois commerce, when the vile, venal Rembrandt painted* Aristotle; *and our own time, with its various explosions of war, commerce, and art, when* Aristotle *was sold to the Met for what was then an unprecedented amount. Not much has changed, the philosopher muses.*

The novel, which begins with the painting and jump-cuts through time and space, is static (rather than dramatic) and is best "read" like a painting. Heller, who spent two and a half years researching historical sources for the book, uses the technique of "history as headline" to illustrate his belief that "all history is bunk." "Don't believe anything you read," he quips, "including this book."

Only Joseph Heller could contemplate the painting and spin out certain associations—Homer, the Lusitania, *Alexander the Great, Mussolini, Xenophon, the Dutch in Sumatra, Alcibiades, Wallis Simpson, Athenian democracy-tyranny, a kipper-making machine,*



MICHAEL SPANO © 1988

Joseph Heller and bust of Homer.

Sparta, the stock-market crash, Socrates, Jesse Owens, Pericles, Walt Disney, Solon, how to scumble paint, Jan Six, penicillin, Doctor Tulp, Waterloo, J. P. Morgan, Pieter Corneliszoon Hooft, James Rorimer (the director of the Met who bought the Aristotle), *and, of course, Rembrandt—into a riveting parody.*

In this antic Rorschach test of a book, Heller shows why, when a work of art leaves the possession of its creator, it loses most, if not all, of its meaning. The chapter "The Last Laugh," excerpted here—it is the first time Connoisseur *has published a work of fiction in its eighty-eight-year history—traces how* Aristotle *made its way from Amsterdam to Sicily to New York and how the trip might—or might not—have been worth it.*

From his new novel, *Picture This*, a sardonic view of the art world

The novel's protagonist is the painting *Aristotle,* now in the Met after a 307-year-long journey of adventure, mystery, and mistaken identity.

It was the fortune of Rembrandt's Aristotle to begin his travels with a journey from Amsterdam to Sicily in 1654 and to conclude them in America in 1961 with a triumphant debut at the Metropolitan Museum of Art on Fifth Avenue in New York, three centuries short six years after the island of Manhattan was ceded to the English, the Dutch deciding that they would not fight to hold what they could not keep and administer.

In actuality, the painting had crossed the Atlantic soon after the turn of the century, in time to avoid the dangers of the First World War and the perils of crossing the Atlantic at any time. On the night of April 14 in 1912, the unsinkable British ocean liner the *Titanic* sank after colliding with an iceberg, with a loss of lives of over fifteen hundred of the twenty-two hundred people aboard, and that same year U.S. troops were occupying Tientsin, China, to protect American interests there, U.S. Marines were landing in Cuba to protect American interests there, and U.S. Marines were landing in Nicaragua to protect American interests there too after rebels had massacred Nicaraguan soldiers, and the First Balkan War broke out.

Nobody knows how many Rembrandts perished in the First World War because

nobody knows how many Rembrandts were painted by Rembrandt, his collaborators, and his counterfeiters.

It was the fate of Rembrandt's *Homer Dictating to a Scribe,* scorched, repainted, and reduced by fire to almost half the original size, to make its way to the museum of the Mauritshuis in The Hague, where, presumably, like the *Aristotle* at the Metropolitan, it will stay forever, until the end of time.

It was the fate of the Ruffo *Alexander* to be lost. If found, it will be worth a fortune.

In the meanwhile a golden opportunity exists for a gifted forger to create the original Rembrandt painting of the Ruffo *Alexander,* the only stipulations being that it conform in dimensions with those in the contract, be made of four pieces of canvas sewn together with seams so "frightful, it is difficult to believe," and that it be done with pigments old enough to stand the tests of time as measured by advanced technological procedures. The chances to succeed will be enhanced if the face of Alexander resembles the face in the two Rembrandt *Alexanders* we do have.

In his will Don Antonio Ruffo, the Sicilian nobleman who commissioned the painting from Rembrandt, in 1652, included his three Rembrandts in a list of one hundred paintings that were to go intact to the eldest son in each generation as a collection not to be separated, sold, or disposed of in any other way. In 1743, his eldest great-grandson died in the plague, as did all of his brothers. And in 1750 the Ruffo family divided in two lines. What became of the *Aristotle* then and the rest of the "hundred paintings" is anybody's guess. We do know, however, that by 1815, the year of Waterloo and the conclusion of the Congress of Vienna, Don Antonio's wishes had been disregarded, for the painting was on display in London, as a picture of someone else, the property of Sir Abraham Hume of Ashridge Park, Berkhampstead, Hertfordshire.

He could hardly be recognized.

"I wonder who he is?" a bewhiskered gentleman inquired from a distance in the gallery in which he was on exhibition.

His companion, an elegant woman with auburn hair and a rolled-up parasol, answered, "He looks just like the Dutch poet and historian Pieter Corneliszoon Hooft, doesn't he?"

"You're right, by Jove!" said the gentleman happily, reading the identification.

Aristotle was shaken. No one knows how he went so far, from Ruffo's Messina in Sicily to Sir Abraham Hume's Hertfordshire and London, although we know much about him since.

No one knows the tortuous route traveled by the damaged *Homer* from the Ruffos in Italy into the collection of the Bridgewater Gallery of the Earl of Ellesmere in England by 1885, but there can be no doubt that the scarred *Homer* of Rembrandt, like the blind Homer in legend, had a harder time than the *Aristotle.*

Life has always been easier for the sons of professional men in the upper class than for artists who start at the bottom, especially poets.

In Sicily back in 1664 Aristotle had recognized the face in the painting of Homer as the one on the bust he had been contemplating on Ruffo's wall the previous ten years. Aristotle could tell at first glance that to the ground of a light shade of yellow and pink, consisting of much chalk mixed with a little ocher, Rembrandt had added preparatory layers of a rather darker tone of reddish brown. Aristotle had learned much more about painting in his two years with Rembrandt. These basic layers of the ground consisted in the main of chalk, ochers, and umbers mixed with a little white lead. On top of these layers he spread a dark grayish-brown underpainting of mysterious and subtle effect that appeared in various places in the cloak, the head, the beard, and the background, into which umber and a great deal of coarse white lead had been worked. Rembrandt put only a lighter top layer in the shadowy areas of the head, the cap, and the beard, making sure that the tone of even the dark areas of the figure was tinged by the grayish-brown layer of umber and white lead underneath. The brown, red, and yellow pigments in the cap, face, and beard were ochers, while the yellow ribbon across the forehead was of lead-tin yellow mixed with more white lead.

There was no red lake pigment used, not even in the flesh tones or areas of shadow.

In a color scheme restricted almost wholly to shades of brown, white, and dim gold, Rembrandt had conceived a blind old poet in a dark-brown cloak with wide sleeves and with a golden-yellow shawl over his cloak. Homer is wearing a poet's fillet on his brow, and on his head Rembrandt put an odd cap. Homer leans on his stick, his mouth open. His sightless eyes are open too.

He was almost human.

Aristotle was tormented by the thought that more work, and more paint, had gone into this painting than his own, although the price was the same. He did not feel cordial. He tried hard not to be envious. Aristotle was better-looking. Homer was blind.

He convinced himself he was much better off: he would rather have eyes and look like a foreigner than be blind like Homer and find his way with a staff, and by the

Heller juggles events: the horrors of World War I; the dealings of Joseph Duveen, who sold and resold the *Aristotle* at profit. Right: A Rembrandt portrait of Jan Six, who posed as Aristotle for the famous painting "because Rembrandt liked his face better."

© COLLECTIE SIX, AMSTERDAM

time Homer came into the picture, the Ruffos had found out who he was and looked up to him as Aristotle, the great philosopher of antiquity, and knew he was not Albertus Magnus or some nameless phrenologist. They were all the more vain for his presence in their household.

Before [the pioneering Dutch Rembrandt scholar Abraham] Bredius identified the painting in London, there was a span of about a hundred thirty-five years in which nothing more of the *Homer* is known than was known to the Greeks of the Homer of ancient Ionia.

We deduce the poet from the poetry.

We deduce a Creator from a universe moving like clockwork, although we now know that our universe is a fire and our planet an ember.

Soon there will be no more people left.

Life is more than half over.

With the *Aristotle,* there was a disappearance of some sixty-five years before he turned up in London in 1815 as P. C. Hooft, the possession of Sir Abraham Hume. Sir Abraham died in 1838, and after his death Aristotle remained for much of the rest of that century with the family at Ashridge Park. With the death of Adelbert Wellington Brownlow Cust in 1893, Aristotle's idyll at Ashridge Park, for reasons we don't know, came, unfortunately, to an end.

Except for art dealers and one young American heir, all the owners kept the painting for their whole lives.

He was sold in London, where Bredius saw him, and within four years was in Paris, the property of the extraordinary art collector Rodolphe Kann. When Kann died, the painting was bought by the dealer Joseph Duveen, and the stage was set for the completion of the journeys of the *Aristotle,* from their commencement in Amsterdam to their termination in New York, and for his descent from the aristocracy of the Old World into the middle class of the New.

In 1907, when the steamship *Lusitania* set her speed record [crossing the Atlantic from Queenstown, Ireland, to New York City], Duveen sold the *Aristotle,* for "six figures," he reported, to Mrs. Collis P. Huntington of New York City, the first of its American owners. It is possible the painting was aboard.

Mrs. Huntington, the former Arabella Duval Yarrington Worsham of Alabama, was the widow of the eastern railroad millionaire Collis P. Huntington, who was born in the state of Connecticut, lived in New York, and was instrumental in the construction of the Central Pacific Railroad across the Sierra Nevada and eventually consolidated virtually all transportation in the West into the Southern Pacific Railroad Company, of which he was the principal owner, as he was of the Chesapeake & Ohio and other railroads, and she would soon become Mrs. Henry E. Huntington by marrying the nephew of her former husband. The real story behind this marriage to her deceased husband's nephew is undoubtedly intriguing, but not to us.

Mrs. Huntington thought Duveen's asking price high, and Aristotle agreed. But she wanted a Rembrandt.

"Do you know who the man in the painting is?" she inquired. "I have always wanted a painting of the poet Virgil."

"It's a portrait of the poet Virgil."

Rembrandt's *Portrait of Virgil* crossed the Atlantic and was installed in Mrs. Huntington's home at Fifth Avenue and Fifty-seventh Street, Number 2 East.

Rembrandt's painting of P. C. Hooft has not been heard of since.

And in the same year Aristotle passed customs and was admitted to America, President Theodore Roosevelt barred the Japanese from immigrating to the United States, the Dutch completed the occupation of Sumatra by defeating the Achinese people there, and John Pierpont Morgan halted the run on banks in the United

States by importing $100 million in gold from Europe. Mrs. Huntington kept the painting until she passed away seventeen years later, in 1924, when Adolf Hitler was in prison in Munich writing the first volume of his *Mein Kampf*.

She left the *Aristotle* to her son, Archer M. Huntington, who sold it back to Duveen in 1928, twenty-one years after the dealer had parted with it. Duveen shipped the painting back across the Atlantic to be cleaned by a master restorer in The Hague, and next to either his London or his Paris establishment, where he had it examined by the noted Dutch Rembrandt scholar F. Schmidt-Degener. Only then did Duveen find out that this Rembrandt was the *Aristotle* described in the Ruffo family archives, opened in 1916.

Rembrandt's celebrated *Portrait of Virgil* then went the way of the celebrated Rembrandt *Portrait of Pieter Hooft*.

By November of that year, Aristotle was back in New York, and Duveen sold the painting to Mr. and Mrs. Alfred W. Erickson, of 110 East Thirty-fifth Street. Mr. Erickson owned an advertising agency and was later a founding partner of the firm of McCann-Erickson, which grew to become, and probably remains, one of the largest advertising entities in the world.

The price was $750,000.

We are surprised that the owner of an advertising agency back in 1928 could spend $750,000 for a painting.

Aristotle wanted to cry out from the canvas that no painting on earth was worth $750,000 in aesthetic value, and that no artist on earth would disagree.

"Of course," said the suave art dealer, later Lord Duveen of Millbank, to Mr. and Mrs. Erickson, "I am really losing money by selling it so cheaply now, for certainly it soon will be worth very much more."

Money *has* no worth, Aristotle could have told all three of them repeatedly until he was blue in the face, but knew he would not be believed.

There was a boom now in art buying in America too, fueled in large part by art dealers and interior decorators profiting from it, and Aristotle was pained by his depreciation as a philosopher in contrast to Rembrandt's appreciation as a painter. He would listen despondently as Duveen extolled the virtues of Rembrandt. Duveen never said much about Aristotle's philosophy.

Rembrandt was more illustrious than he was.

So were previous owners. Not least among the rare beauties of the painting stressed by Duveen was the ownership by Mrs. Collis P. Huntington, who had kept it until her death.

He sometimes longed for the days when he was P. C. Hooft and lived with Sir Abraham Hume in Hertfordshire. Plato might have laughed, sardonically, to see him so coarsely retailed, and as a part of the sales package with the lesser appeal.

The sale to the Ericksons was contracted on November 12, 1928, only a few days after Herbert Hoover was elected thirty-first president of the United States, the same year the Kellogg-Briand Pact outlawing war was signed in Paris by more than sixty states; Benito Mussolini published an autobiography titled *My Autobiography;* Walt Disney, in California, produced the first Mickey Mouse film; Franz Lehár composed the operetta *Frederika* in Berlin; Alexander Fleming discovered penicillin; Amsterdam was host to the Olympic Games; and the first machine for boning and cleaning kippers, which are herring, male salmon, and sea trout that are cured by splitting, cleaning, salting, and smoking, was given its initial run in Fleetwood, England.

In the Summer Olympic Games of 1928 the U.S. led all other nations with one hundred thirty-one points.

The sale was completed with a final payment by Mr. Erickson in January of 1929.

In October of 1929 the stock market crashed. The Great Depression followed and spread through the world.

The second J. P. Morgan, the son of the first one, poured out hundreds of millions of dollars in a futile attempt to stabilize the uncontrollable market.

There was no stopping the decline.

People still don't explain why the stock market had to crash and the Great Depression had to follow.

On November 12, 1930, two years to the day after the purchase, Erickson sold the *Aristotle* back to Duveen for $500,000, a quarter of a million less than he had paid.

"You assured me," said Mr. Erickson, grimly, when Mr. Duveen named his price, "that the work would increase in value."

"These are difficult times now, Mr. Erickson," responded Duveen. "We are living in the Great Depression."

"I think I know that."

In February of 1936, his financial health restored, Mr. Erickson reacquired the painting from Duveen for $590,000, the difference of $90,000 representing charges for interest and the New York sales tax, and Aristotle moved out of the storage room back to the Erickson home at 110 East Thirty-fifth Street the same year Edward VIII became king of England and abdicated to marry the woman he loved, Mrs. Wallis Warfield Simpson; Italy invaded and annexed Ethiopia; Stalin continued his lethal purge trials in Russia; Hitler won elections in Germany with 99

Heller spins out associations like the 1928 Summer Olympics, the 1929 stock-market crash, when ticker-tape machines went haywire, and the death of Socrates, who plays a major role in the novel.

THE DEATH OF SOCRATES, BY JACQUES LOUIS DAVID. THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, WOLFE FUND, 1931. CATHARINE LORILLARD WOLFE COLLECTION (31.45)

percent of the vote; Franklin Delano Roosevelt won reelection here, with 98.7 percent of the electoral vote; and Margaret Mitchell published *Gone with the Wind* while the American Negro Jesse Owens was winning four gold medals in the track and field events of the Olympic Games in Berlin, frustrating and enraging Hitler; and the U.S. national debt was increasing to $34 billion because of expenditures for relief programs instituted by Roosevelt's New Deal.

Henry Ford, who was having his problems with union organizers, admired Adolf Hitler and his Nazis, and Hitler admired him.

There were no union problems in Nazi Germany.

There were no union problems in the Soviet Union either, but there were no Henry Fords.

Between 1920 and 1922, Mr. Ford's newspaper, the *Dearborn Independent,* had published in ninety-two consecutive issues articles of virulent anti-Semitism, most relating to the contents of a nineteenth-century pamphlet, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion,* which was known to consist of spurious transcripts of conversations that had never taken place, and whose republication and distribution Ford financed.

Young Hitler kept a photograph of Henry Ford in his room for inspiration.

Shortly before World War II, Chancellor Hitler awarded Henry Ford the Grand Cross of the German Eagle, the highest award to a foreigner that the Third Reich could bestow, and Ford was honored to accept. Ford would not allow his company to fulfill a contract to manufacture engines in this country for Britain's Royal Air Force.

Shortly after the war, it was told of Mr. Ford that he wept repentantly at pictures of the death camps. This is another one of those stories that seem too good to be true.

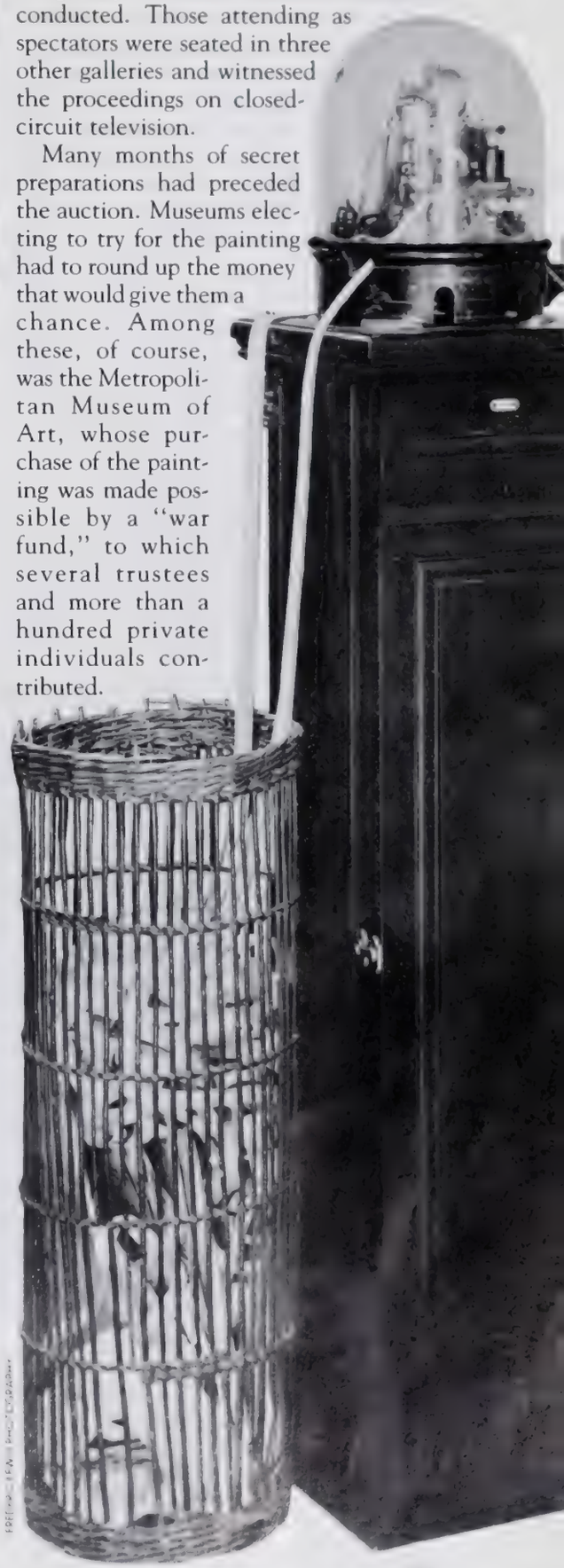
On November 2 of 1936, nine months after Mr. Erickson repurchased the painting, he died. He left the *Aristotle* in trust to his wife, Rita, together with the rest of the works in his collection, and the painting was with her until her death twenty-five years later, in February of 1961.

Before her death, Mrs. Erickson was solicited many times by dealers seeking to sell the picture and curators hoping to be given it. After her death, the trustees of her estate decided her testamentary desires would best be fulfilled by a public sale of the paintings, and an auction was announced for later that year at the Parke-Bernet Galleries at 980 Madison Avenue in New York.

It was an open secret, said the *New York Times,* that the auction houses of Sotheby's and Christie's were also vying for "the plum." Because the Erickson sale involved twenty-four pictures expected to bring at least $3,000,000, it was understood that the gallery commission was a negotiated figure instead of the standard rate.

The auction attracted widespread attention. Prospective buyers—collectors, agents of collectors, representatives of museums—were admitted to the main hall of the gallery, in which the auction would be conducted. Those attending as spectators were seated in three other galleries and witnessed the proceedings on closed-circuit television.

Many months of secret preparations had preceded the auction. Museums electing to try for the painting had to round up the money that would give them a chance. Among these, of course, was the Metropolitan Museum of Art, whose purchase of the painting was made possible by a "war fund," to which several trustees and more than a hundred private individuals contributed.



The director of the museum, Mr. James J. Rorimer, explained: "Aristotle is one of the great paintings in the world, and it would have been heartbreaking, with Wall Street so close, to have lost out on it."

There was applause from the audience in all four galleries when the *Aristotle* was brought onstage for the start of the sale and spotlights transformed those sleeves of his white robe into folds of Rembrandt gold.

There was a louder ovation four minutes later when the auction was over and the auctioneer announced that the prize had been won by an "eastern museum," bidding $2,300,000.

The day on which the painting first went on display, a Saturday, forty-two thousand people came to the Metropolitan Museum. Aristotle was mounted against a large background of red velvet, just a few paces from the Sphinx of Queen Hatshepsut, which had been reconstructed from fragments found at her mortuary temple at Deir el Bahri, dating back to around 1490 B.C. The Sphinx drew scant attention.

Aristotle was overcome by the commotion and the ranks of people surging forward to see him.

He wondered if the bust of Homer was as impressed as he was.

He wondered what Rembrandt would say if he could see him now.

Probably, he would say that he had sold him too soon.

For the next day, Sunday, when the museum would be open just four hours, officials forecast hopefully an attendance of fifty thousand. If that many materialized, the record for a single day for the museum, which had exhibited the Mona Lisa and the Vatican *Pietà* of Michelangelo, would be exceeded by nearly seven thousand.

More than eighty thousand showed up!

Long lines formed early at the main entrance and at three supplementary entrances, one from the parking lot behind the museum, another at Fifth Avenue and Eighty-first Street, and the third at Fifth Avenue and Eighty-third Street, and when the four-hour day was over, officials announced that 82,629 persons had attended.

That many [illegible] hours divides

ASSOCIATED PRESS

into some 20,650 people an hour, 344 people a minute, or slightly more than 5.7 people every second. Even if this figure is a lie, it is a very impressive lie.

They would have had to step very lively to come one at a time.

However, they approached in groups. At no time were there fewer than eighteen people at the guardrail in front of the masterpiece, and a constant mass of hundreds more stretched patiently behind them to the opposite wall.

For Aristotle those days were the most thrilling he could recall. There were people who had heard of Aristotle and people who had heard of Rembrandt, but there were not many, until they read of the auction, who had known that the two had once been closely associated. Not in either of Aristotle's lifetimes had he been the idol of so much curiosity and veneration.

Some men bared their heads as they neared, as though uncovering for the flag, and many men and women put hand over heart as they paid him homage.

[illegible]

One woman chewed noisily on a salted pretzel.

One gentleman observed with authority that it had cost a lot of money, but he could see now that it was worth it.

Now and then in the chorus of general praise a discordant voice inquired why the money could not have been spent to feed hungry families.

Aristotle knew why.

There is never any shortage of hungry families. But great paintings by great painters come rarely on the market. And a great painting of Aristotle was practically unique.

"I waited longer on line than I did for the Mona Lisa," a mother explained to her young daughter. "This one is better."

"He looks like Pieter Hooft," the little girl answered.

By the end of that week Aristotle was the most famous philosopher in New York. Rembrandt was the most talked-about painter.

Homer was hardly mentioned.

Paperback editions of works by Aristotle appeared on best-seller lists, and publishers, underestimating demand, ran out of stock.

The Getty Foundation and the MacArthur Foundation both made haste to announce they would have wanted the painting had they been in existence.

The governments of Iran, Brunei, and Kuwait were short of cash.

In Washington, a spokesman said the president would have endeavored to raise money to buy the painting for the White House had anyone in his administration known of the sale.

There are people willing to pay a great deal to own the most expensive painting in the world. They will not pay as much for one that costs less.

In the first seven weeks, attendance at the museum was a record 1,079,610, and it is reasonable to assume that almost all came to look at least once at the picture of Aristotle.

He had hardly a moment to himself.

But in the weeks that followed, the numbers inexorably declined, and he began inexorably to feel neglected. He was moved from the Great Hall into an ordi-

Top: James J. Rorimer (center), director of the Met, used a secret code to outbid all others at the 1961 Parke-Bernet auction. Opposite: His prize on display in the Met, where 120,000 flocked the first two days.

nary gallery. People strolled in who did not even know he was there.

He was gloomier than ever. He missed the hurrying crowds with beaming faces that no longer flocked to see him. He even missed the company of the Sphinx of Queen Hatshepsut from the mortuary temple at Deir el Bahri. He hung in a room with a bunch of other somber Rembrandts, of which he quickly grew tired. How he longed for a splash of sunlight, for a touch of the gay color, smiling faces, pretty women present in other paintings with which he had occasionally spent time in other places. He would pay almost anything for a Renoir or a Picasso.

He found himself trembling in fear of his own authenticity each time the attribution of one of the other Rembrandts in his room came into question or was said to be spurious. There were two, a man and a woman, about whom he harbored doubts from the first day he saw them, and he eyed them dejectedly with anxiety and hostility. They did not look to him entirely like the Rembrandt he knew. He was nervously aware that he was several centimeters smaller than he had been originally, and that some specialists did not accept normal shrinkage as a credible explanation.

In 1987 a painting of sunflowers by Vincent van Gogh in which the chrome-yellow pigment had turned muddy was sold for $39.9 million to a Japanese insurance company that did not care about the chrome yellow. Hundreds of millions of people in countries all over the world did not rush to see it. Later in 1987 a different painting by van Gogh brought $53.9 million.

Rembrandt's *Aristotle* was overshadowed.

Aristotle had a lump in his throat. The more he thought about it, the more he wished he were a van Gogh. He envied the paintings in the tidier Frick museum farther downtown, which itself was a work of art. There, with the Titian and the Goyas, the Velázquez and El Grecos, the Holbein *Thomas More,* and, as a worthy companion piece to himself, the magnificent Rembrandt self-portrait of 1658, in which Rembrandt looks like a man who will throw you out if he does not like your manner or breeding, Aristotle would be with his peers in the company he deserved, and make a much stronger impression in what everyone knew was a smarter museum, despite the repellent Fragonards and the peculiar *Polish Rider.*

Aristotle also preferred the better location of the Frick. It was nearer the zoo.

As for the auction itself, there fell near the end a dramatic silence of some ten seconds that seemed like ten hours in which it appeared that the Cleveland Museum of Art was going to acquire the painting with a bid of $2,250,000.

The wife of one of the trustees of the Metropolitan was in such terror that Mr. Rorimer, bidding for the museum, had fallen asleep that she was on the verge of shrieking to her husband to call out another $100,000.

But Mr. Rorimer was not asleep. Bidding secretively in the code prearranged, he fingered his lapel and moved his eyes to the right, signaling $50,000 more.

The dealer bidding for Cleveland had reached the maximum authorized and could go no higher.

The Metropolitan Museum would not say how much higher it had been prepared to go.

The third-highest bid of $1,950,000 was traced to the Carnegie Institute of Fine Arts in Pittsburgh, which had the support of a benefactor, Mrs. Sarah Mellon Scaife, who had allotted personal funds of a little over $2,000,000 for the purchase of the Rembrandt.

In consolation for the loss of the Rembrandt, Pittsburgh came home with the *Man with the Herring* [by Frans Hals] for $145,000.

The fourth-highest bidder was a nobleman in Switzerland of German descent.

Within a few days of the auction, Mr. Rorimer felt obliged to take exception to an editorial in the *New York Times* that alluded to the vulgarity of the event. The newspaper spoke of "a persistent feeling of discomfort, even of distaste, with the price," and asked if that amount of money could have been better spent. Mr. Rorimer, defending the museum, explained to the press that the cost was of no importance.

"Money is only a medium of exchange."

There were people of good character in the vicinity of the painting willing to swear under oath they heard Aristotle snort. □

From the forthcoming book Picture This, *by Joseph Heller, to be published by G. P. Putnam's Sons. Copyright © 1988 by Joseph Heller.*

In 1983 the late Angelo Donghia was sitting on top of the world—his upholstered bed. A pioneer in licensing, he also proved the need for quality control.

Dawn Of The Decorators

They are invading furniture design

Why are the men in the photograph at right smiling? Top decorators (or masters of marketing), they have, in collaboration with some high-quality commercial manufacturers, designed their own lines of furniture. That, by itself, is hardly cause for their elation. Think of how many home furnishings have been produced—from Frank Lloyd Wright's tables and Eames's chair to Italy's Memphis settees—by architects, industrial designers, and even sculptors. What's new is that the men in the photograph determine trends and fix tastes—they normally work only for wealthy individuals, using only [illegible] custom-made products in that work—and [illegible] now caught the scent of (smile) real money. [illegible] firmly fixed on the buying habits of a huge [illegible] middle-income Americans who want truly [illegible] furniture that is affordable.

PHOTOGRAPH BY NIGEL DICKSON

These happy fellows, top decorators and trendsetters in home furnishings, are poised for a potential bonanza. Seated, clockwise from left: Mark Hampton, Juan Montoya, Jay Spectre, Carl Levine (the Bloomingdale's senior vice-president in charge of furniture), John Saladino, Pierre LeVec, Mario Buatta, Pierre Moulin.

/ Nancy Hoving

FOR PICTURE SOURCES, SEE PAGE 196. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION SEE SHOPPING GUIDE, ON PAGE 208

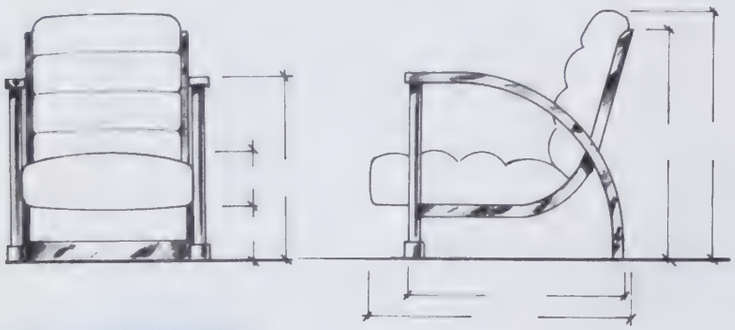
Eleven years ago, the late Angelo Donghia, a brilliantly talented decorator known for his flair with the contemporary look, spotted the potential. He found in the Kroehler Company a management ready to raise its standing in the furniture market. While Donghia continued to run his decorating business from New York, he worked with Kroehler to produce a line of contemporary sofas, chairs, and tables. The designs, everybody said, were excellent. But Kroehler did not do as well—the upholstery was apparently not up to par—and eventually folded. The time was not ripe.

Now the portents are much better. Like the best chefs, the best decorators have become darlings of American society. They are courted, sometimes for their expertise, often for their warmth and wit. They also represent the elusive quality called "class"—another eagerly sought commodity these days—for they appear to know a great deal about how to live. Nor is it just the insecure, if affluent, consumer who is glad to sit in veneration at the decorators' feet. The established manufacturers are willing to spend heavily to have the magic rub off, first on their newest lines and then, they hope, on the bottom line.

Perhaps no decorator has had more experience in this new field than the multitalented Jay Spectre, a dandy with a sharp business brain under his shiny pate. As he tells it, he was walking through Bloomingdale's one day when he bumped into Carl Levine, the store's savvy senior vice-president in charge of furniture. "When are you going to do a collection of furniture for Bloomingdale's?" Levine asked. "Anytime you ask me," answered Spectre.

Levine, who has come to act often as marriage broker in such deals, learned that the owners of the Century Furniture Company, of Hickory, North Carolina, known for the traditional look of their furniture, were seeking a way to enter the contemporary side of the market. Levine also admired Spectre's work, work that might be characterized as twentieth-century *and* pedigreed. To put the manufacturer together with the decorator,

JAY SPECTRE



Spectre looks back for inspiration to the styles of the twentieth century, especially to the heyday of French art deco and American moderne, in the 1920s and 1930s—and then adds a fillip of Hollywood. The bleached-oak Eclipse chair (left, above and below) and the matching side table (below, right) are his signature pieces for the Century Furniture Company. The (Sonia) Delaunay table (right) is Spectre's apt tribute to the unique style of that artist. He hopes that one day his designs will be collector's items.

Levine reasoned, might benefit both—and Bloomingdale's, too. He was right, as it turns out: today, two years after the introduction of the Spectre I collection, Spectre and Century have produced nearly 200 items, most of which are still available. As for Bloomingdale's, Carl Levine could not be happier. Last year, the line was the single most successful of all he carried. Convinced of the correctness of the trend, he is planning to carry other decorator-inspired lines.

"I'm having a ball," says Spectre. "Creative people need a challenge. Let's bring some good design at reasonable prices to people. I think that's the way the market is going. Otherwise the decorating business has outpriced itself."

For a man having fun, Spectre sounds suspiciously like a businessman discovering capitalism: "We're making money, I don't deny it, but we're still in the formative stages. It takes five to six years to build a new business. It takes planning, marketing strategy, tenacity, investment of time and money, spirits, guts." For the record, Spectre, like the other decorators, works on a licensing arrangement with the manufacturer. Royalty fees range from 3 to 8 percent, depending on volume and costs.

When the project was announced, the craftsmen at Century had their doubts about a decorator's coming down from New York and telling them how to make furniture. Instead, Spectre turned up and asked their advice: "How can I simplify this? How can I make it more inexpensively?" He compliments them on their workmanship and thinks the prices (one-third to one-half of those of custom-made equivalents) are excellent.

The Shuford family, owners of Century, have come to love the flair and creative sense that Spectre has brought them, particularly in the Eclipse line, which reflects the designer's love affair with a mythical Hollywood of the 1930s. "At first, so many retailers and our own salesmen were afraid of it," says Nancy Shuford Dowdy. "It was different. It raised eyebrows.

MARK HAMPTON

Mark Hampton's English-country look satisfies the way a Trollope novel does. Here are new versions of original pieces for Hickory Chair: the Regency Cockfight chair and "X" bench (drawings far left); the console table (left), resembling a Georgian mantelpiece and based on William Kent's pieces ca. 1760; the tufted sofa (below), inspired by Syrie Maugham.

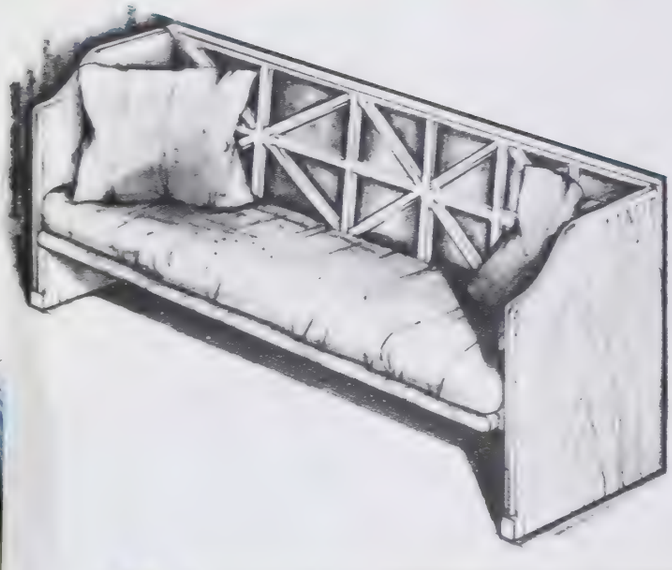
they had to educate them. His enthusiasm was infectious. Distribution began to pick up, starting in New York and Los Angeles. Now it's acceptable. The retailers and salesmen love it. It's selling." She continues, "We've found the consumer wants a choice, not just eighteenth-century reproductions, but a sharper, contemporary look. They want nice things, and in contemporary there haven't been many choices."

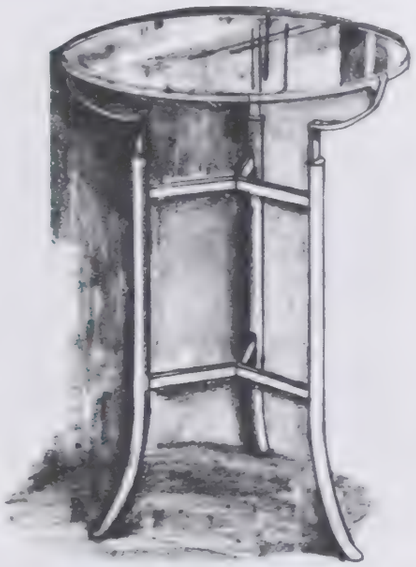
As proud designers, the decorators follow their own bents. Mark Hampton, for example, has made his name designing interiors in the classical English-country-house mode—gorgeous agglomerations of chintz-covered comfortable furniture and colorful wallpapers with wonderful wood pieces. Hampton was sounding the waters of designing a line when Bill Merrill, director of design of Hickory Chair, invited him to jump right in. What the North Carolina firm wanted was Hampton's taste. He soon produced some pieces of furniture from his own collection of English furniture for Hickory to reproduce and designed others to complement them. The pieces are "comfortable and versatile," says Merrill. "They bridge the time frame between the late-eighteenth-century, Regency, and early-Victorian periods."

Although Hampton, who has the charm and elegance of a British aristocrat, is a hard taskmaster, he gets along well with the craftsmen at the factory. Hampton is continually delighted by their knowledge of furniture. They rose to his challenges: to get the right finish on the Regency console, the proper tufting on the Syrie Maugham–style couch—all the important details.

Although the line was introduced at the High Point market, in North Carolina, only last April, the orders from retail stores are rolling in. But the acid test comes later this fall, as the first pieces reach the stores. Bill Merrill says Hickory Chair sees a long-term relationship with Hampton. In return, company officials hope, Hampton's style and class will add some glitter to the market perception of Hickory, until

JOHN SALADINO





John Saladino opened his own showroom after the success of his Façade collection, for Baker, in 1984. A trained art historian, he does not hesitate to show his knowledge—for instance, in the Porticus bench (left and below), which was inspired by the clerestory windows in Rome's Baths of Diocletian, and the Tripod table (above), whose ancient form is renewed by the use of high-tech low-carbon steel. The upholstered Tulip chair adds comfort to dining.

now regarded as the company that does those nice, safe mahogany reproductions.

The experience is typical of that of the decorators who have ventured into furniture design. Here is what the others are doing:

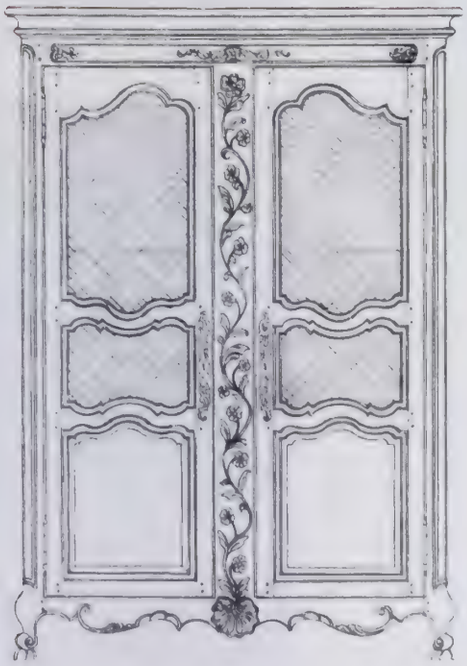
Juan Montoya. A quiet, thoughtful man with an appealing smile, Montoya is Colombian by birth and trained at the Parsons School of Design. He works in a highly eclectic style and thinks nothing of combining the very modern with the very ancient. Montoya recently completed a few upholstery pieces for Preview, a High Point company, and is now working with the Baker Furniture Co., of Grand Rapids, Michigan, though at press time no contract had been signed. His line, which will include case goods, accessories, and fabrics, is very sophisticated, harking back variously to pre-Columbian forms and art deco.

Montoya started thinking about designing furniture because he found the spaces in the typical American apartment boring. "They lack the eccentricity that makes European spaces so interesting," he explains. "As a result, the scale of American furniture often seems wrong." He calls the situation "an interesting challenge." One response can be seen in his high-style dining table, with an open shelf just below the top for storing each place setting. It is a highly practical detail and one that is characteristic of this painstaking designer.

Mario Buatta. What might attract a venerable old firm like John Widdicomb to this decorator on the go? The new owners, known in the industry as "the two Mikes"—Michael Greengard and Michael Levitas—want his ability at the drawing board. "Mario can take elements and incorporate them in something that has an eighteenth-century look, the Buatta feel, and still meet the manufacturing standards of the twentieth century," says Mike Greengard, the president of Widdicomb. "He also opens doors for us and gives us access to the antiques market we don't have. He grabs attention for us." One unexpected result, Greengard says, is a "change in management style required to fit Mario's life-style."

PIERRE DEUX

ierre Deux whetted the merican appetite for fine ench-provincial furniture. ow Henredon Furniture ıdustries is reproducing piecs from their collection, inuding the spectacular eighenth-century Norman wedıng armoire, of oak (far ght); the bookcase, with ıicken-wire door (drawing, enter); the Louis XV–style esk, its original from the oire Valley (right); an adaption of a Second Empire caopy bed, with an antique eel finish (below).



Buatta is ebullient, always in a hurry, and infects a certain vague breeziness. But no one has a quicker or more discerning eye, a speedier or more uncluttered brain. He works the flamboyant end of the English-country look. Best-known for elaborate window treatments and cushy upholstery, Buatta is accentuating that look for Widdicomb.

Buatta is a master of juggling demands on his time. When he met the principals of Widdicomb for the first time, he arrived late, portable telephone to his ear, talking a mile a minute while beaming his infectious grin at all assembled. At the end of the meeting, Mike Levitas, the vice-president of the company and a shy man, said to Mario Buatta, "You've made me a hero to my mother. She's followed your career, read everything about you, and thinks you're wonderful. May I have your autograph for her?"

Pierre Deux. Pierre LeVec is a dapper French American who sports a neat mustache. Twenty years ago he suffered a heart attack. Once he recovered, he decided to open a small antiques shop in Greenwich Village, specializing in French-provincial antiques from all over France. He thought it would be a quiet business—"just me and some blue-haired old ladies for customers," he says with a twinkle. After he persuaded his old friend Pierre Moulin to join the venture, the two Pierres watched the market boom for country French-provincial furniture, with its lovely, sturdy, hand-carved look. Their timing was perfect; American consumers were searching for a less formal life-style and were establishing second homes. At the same time as they spent more freely, they traveled more frequently.

Pierre Deux's signature look became the bright, sunny prints of Souleiado, which covered most of their upholstered furniture. They began to publish books, educating a growing segment of the market. Meanwhile, the supply of French country antiques was starting to shrink (or to become prohibitively expensive). When Henredon Furniture Industries expressed an interest in reproducing the antiques, the two Pierres were doubtful they could find quali-

MARIO BUATTA

In the department of having your cake and eating it too, the irrepressible Mario Buatta has adapted his favorite antiques for the John Widdicomb Company. Above is his new Regency door cabinet with *faux* bamboo, decorated in chinoiserie. It's the first of eighteen new pieces being introduced to the fall furniture market in High Point.

JUAN MONTOYA

ty workmanship in the United States—until they visited the Henredon showroom in High Point. The company had just been taken over by Masco. Its management wanted to develop a new share of the market and was ready to produce to Pierre Deux's specifications. Now even Bloomingdale's is behind them. The New York store is building a "French house" for the November launch of the line.

John Saladino. He is a pudgy, puckish man with a wry sense of humor and a laconic, deadpan delivery. Saladino may be the most cerebral of the decorators. His training as a painter and art historian accounts for the breadth of his design vocabulary, from Roman cornices to high-tech finishes.

Like Donghia, Saladino was quick to discern the possibilities in designing furniture for the upper-middle-income market and made several unsuccessful attempts to tap it. Finally, in the fall of 1984, the Baker Furniture Co. introduced Saladino's Façade collection, to great critical acclaim. Although Baker continues to carry part of the collection—proof that there must be some value in it—Saladino has designed a completely new line and had it manufactured for him. Available so far only through his showroom, it plays off architectural details. He likes modular designs, creating parts that can be "ganged up," he says, so that they become something different. In his "Colonnade" grouping, for instance, four movable units, each consisting of a cluster of colonnades, can be joined to form a long coffee table or a large square one. Alternatively, the individual parts can stand as side or end tables.

Saladino is one of the best designers at work today and has an unparalleled color sense (which he credits to his late wife and business associate, Virginia). Whatever burden he may be taking on by producing his furniture, his experience and reputation will surely help him. He already understands the risks.

For the decorator, the main drawback to entering the furniture industry is that the effort can completely disrupt his life. Ultimately, he must set his priorities. He can build his own manufacturing business, or he can license out his designs. Either way, the enterprise demands time, time to promote the manufacturer's output and time in personal appearances—time away from the decorator's own work. John Saladino, like Angelo Donghia, has chosen to run his own show. Spectre plans to expand his licensing activities.

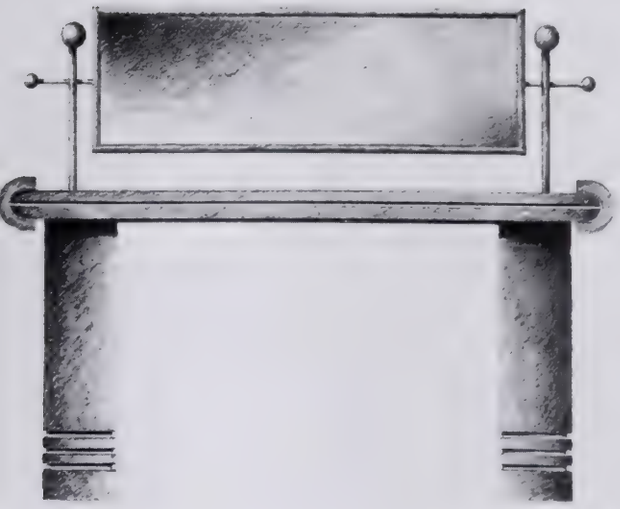
Clearly, the rewards may well be worth the agony. The market for good-looking, original furniture is growing fast, while interior decoration, in the old, lavish sense, is beginning to lose its allure. "It's like the fashion industry's move from couture to ready-to-wear," remarks Juan Montoya. That is why Carl Levine plans to carry many decorator lines at Bloomingdale's, and why he reports being deluged by requests from decorators to be teamed with furniture manufacturers ready to tap the new market. (Ward Bennett may be the next big-name decorator to get on the bandwagon.)

No one has improved on the far-sighted Angelo Donghia. At top are his Grande Flute chairs from 1985, with their original yet classic design.

Beyond that, says Levine, "the furniture industry needed a shot in the arm. It tends to be too conservative." The companies that have sponsored high design are entering what is unknown territory for most of them. But does each have a good enough eye to guide the decorator toward a coherent, focused, marketable collection? Can each learn to operate in the arena of show biz, an arena that is both new and somewhat distasteful to them? They will suddenly find themselves lavishing attention on new marketing strategies and on ways to promote—or use—their new star designers.

The bottom line, says Jay Spectre, is that a piece of furniture with his name on it "is not going to sell unless it has something to say for itself." What he means is that the "star" system does not guarantee success. On the other hand, that system has worked very well indeed in the fashion and entertainment industries, and there is no reason to doubt that it can work in the furniture industry. A chair may soon be more than merely a place to sit or a family heirloom. It may become the vehicle for a shaping vision, a collectible art object connoting status and carrying its creator's name. Yes, the decorators might well smile when they think of such a payoff; the end justifies the sweat. As Mario Buatta says, "It better work. It's my future." ❑

ontoya harks back to icism with the monu- shape of his chair and (top left) for Preview sinuous lines of the ed. Making geometric em fresh and graceful ntoya trademark, ex- ed by the rubbed- acquer frame chair nd the striking vanity The likely manufac- Baker Furniture Co.



Magnificent Obsession

A rare show of Michelangelo's drawings

By Patricia Corbett

WINDSOR CASTLE, ROYAL LIBRARY, HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II; COURTESY NGA, WASHINGTON, D.C.

***The Labors of Hercules* drawn in red chalk. The awesome novelty of Michelangelo's style stems from his unrelenting obsession with human form.**

"Painting and sculpture have ruined me," Michelangelo complained, letting fly one of those remarks, both self-deprecating and undiplomatic, that became customary in later life. "It would have been better if in my youth I had hired myself out to make sulfur matches." Instead, he had heeded an early calling to the arts. In 1488, at his own insistency, the thirteen-year-old Michelangelo Buonarroti was indentured by his father to the Florentine painter Domenico Ghirlandaio. In [illegible]bio's studio the precocious apprentice [illegible] immediate and unpopular standout [illegible] in drawing, which he unwisely [illegible] by improving on his master. Once, seizing one of Ghirlandaio's laborious figure studies, he effortlessly reproduced the outlines of a draped woman with a few bold strokes of his pen. On another occasion, he improved on one of the master's sketches by retouching it. With more than a hint of conceit, Michelangelo once confided to his biographer Giorgio Vasari that his skill as a draftsman was greater then, when he was young, than it was in his old age.

This streak of vanity, coupled with a well-founded sense of foreboding, prompted Michelangelo to burn heaps of sketches and cartoons only a few weeks before his death, in February 1564, "so that," according to Vasari, "no one should ever know the extent to which he struggled to achieve perfection." Later generations regretted the loss of Michelangelo's graphic work. Benvenuto Cellini regarded the cartoon for the *Battle of Cascina*, of 1505, together with Leonardo's *Anghiari*, as "the school of the world."

Today, only a few hundred sheets bear witness to the travails of an exceptionally long-lived, inventive genius, sketches ranging from ones for the tomb of Julius II, the Sistine frescoes, and the dome of St. Peter's in Rome to ones of the Medici Chapel and the Laurentian library in Florence. It is particularly ironic, in light

of the artist's belief that "the money spent on preliminary drawings pays off one hundred to one," that no more than sixty-odd studies may be connected to the magnificent tangle of bodies that are sprawled across the Sistine ceiling's nearly 5,800 square feet.

An exhibition running from October 9 to December 11 at the National Gallery of Art, in Washington, D.C. (part of which will travel to the Louvre next year), brings together drawings loaned by major European museums to document Michelangelo's activity as a painter, architect, and sculptor. It may also offer a last chance to view these fragile treasures as a group, for curators have awakened to the risk of irreparably damaging artworks on paper by excessive exposure and handling. The insurance bill footed by the show's sponsors, the Olivetti Corporation, has accordingly been boosted. The values are staggering, with many drawings in the millions.

"This show is not meant as a Michelangelo potpourri," says Michael Hirst, a professor at the Courtauld Institute, in London, and author of the catalog of figure drawings. "Rather, it illustrates the full variety of drawings he produced, from simple block sketches for the marble cutters at Carrara to the highly finished chalk 'presentation drawings' which he made as gifts for special friends." The diversity of Michelangelo's graphic techniques, talents, and intents has been a stumbling block for most modern scholars. As strict reductionists alternate with more-lenient revisionists, the "casualty rate" of attributions has soared and plummeted. At a loss for a conclusion—though not for words—as to the authenticity of a page of scrawls, even the incisive Bernard Berenson resorted to academic waffling: "I would hesitate to say that they are not by Michelangelo, though I should prefer to believe that they were by a pupil," he finally pronounced.

Experts have often been puzzled by the small "thumbnail" sketches—briefly outlined figures and structures in pen-and-ink or chalk—that throughout his career Michelangelo used as a form of shorthand for jotting down and juggling possible solutions to compositional problems. Can "the sons and daughters of a colossal and pugnacious race" in the Sistine Chapel frescoes truly descend from inch-high stick figures? How can the romantic concept of artistic ardor and spontaneity be reconciled with Il Divino's meticulously executed red- or black-chalk drawings, where contours and surface hatching are modeled by stumping (rubbed with the finger or a snippet of paper) and then burnished by stippling

Why did he not produce a single landscape?

MUSEO E GALLERIE NAZIONALE DI CAPODIMONTE, NAPLES/COURTESY NGA, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Cartoon for the Crucifixion of Saint Peter.

(flecked with a sharpened chalk tip)? How is it possible to trace the evolution of Michelangelo's major inventions, when the artist regularly returned to favorite motifs—stored in a vast iconographical body bank? Why, in an era fascinated by natural phenomena, did Leonardo's great rival produce not a single landscape or botanical or zoological study, and no more than a pair of portraits, the very bread and butter of the Renaissance artist?

The answers to these questions lie mainly in what can only be described as Michelangelo's utilitarian approach to drawing. He seems never to have sketched purposelessly, and the large cream or buff sheets are faithful palimpsests registering the full spectrum of his personal and professional preoccupations, whether frugal hieroglyphic instructions to the cook (one herring, two rolls of bread, fennel soup) or projected star-burst fortifications for the defense of Florence against the papal attack of 1529. Occasionally a flash of dark humor illuminates the solemn parade of images: the potbellied, hump-backed self-caricature daubing at an ectoplasmic figure overhead on the Sistine ceiling, or the round eye inset at the base of a pilaster for the San Lorenzo sacristy, which serves to transform the curlicue profile into a grimacing mask.

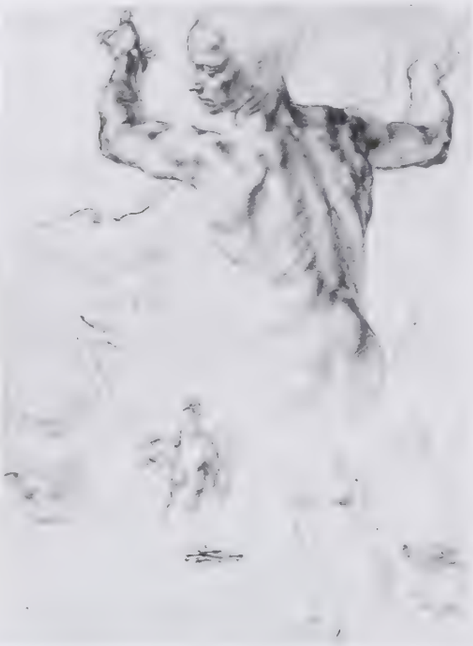
In addition to the verse that often under- or overlays the pictures (as a protégé of Lorenzo [the Magnificent] de' Medici, Michelangelo had rubbed shoulders with humanistic literati—Poliziano, Pico della Mirandola, Marsilio Ficino), a running commentary of laconic one-liners punctuates the visual flow. On a pen sketch, freely inspired by Leonardo's much admired composition of the Virgin in Saint Anne's lap with the infant Jesus, the artist noted wonderingly, "Who would ever say that she was from my hands?" A characteristically pessimistic remark regarding his work in the Sistine Chapel states, "The place is wrong, and no painter am I." His cloddish helper Mini was sharply instructed, "Draw antonio draw antonio and do not waste time." A study for the statue of David is revealingly captioned, "David with his sling, and I with my bow." The drawing of the Crucifixion for his bluestocking friend Vittoria Colonna (whom he admiringly described as a "man within a woman, nay, a god") bears the ambiguous phrase "One does not think of how much blood it costs."

The awesome novelty of Michelangelo's style—its crushing *terribilità*—stems from his unrelenting obsession with human form, to the virtual exclusion of all else. Emotion is expressed through a powerful, acrobatic choreography of twisting, foreshortened limbs—more like Pilobolus than Balanchine. Commenting upon the Pauline Chapel frescoes of the conversion of Saul and the crucifixion of Peter, which show a turmoil of figures set in what appears, even to modern eyes, to be a boundless wasteland, Vasari explained that the painter "attended only to the perfection of art, for there are no towns, no trees, no houses, nor even any . . . adornments." It is true that, eager to pierce the mysteries of anatomy, Michelangelo dissected corpses at the Santo Spirito infirmary in Florence and hardly surprising that rumor charged him with nailing a peasant to a cross so as to sculpt a physiologically correct representation of the crucified Christ.

Yet Michelangelo's fascination with physicality always spurred him to define universal rather than individual canons of beauty, eschewing idiosyncratic, warts-and-all portrayals of reality. "He abhorred making a likeness from life," Vasari noted, "unless the subject was one of perfect

features. Indeed, only one portrait, in black chalk, has survived, of the artist's handsome young friend Andrea Quaratesi. Yet it is obvious, to even an unpracticed viewer, that the androgynous, heroic features of his finest figure studies—the head of Leda and the bust of the Libyan Sibyl—are drawn after muscular male models. These are doubtless none other than Michelangelo's nameless workshop assistants, with caps pulled tight over their brows against sweat and marble dust.

Although tradition has it that Michelangelo's presentation drawings for Tommaso de' Cavalieri around 1530 were intended to instruct the young Roman nobleman in the art of draftsmanship, it is clear that their compositional and technical bravura could elicit only admiration in a beginner, hardly emulation. These emblematic scenes—of Tityus, Ganymede, the fall of Phaëthon, and a lusty bacchanal, as well as a head of Cleopatra—illustrate the urges and wages of passion; they stand as precious, courtly tributes to be savored by the recipient, like love sonnets. Cavalieri wrote Michelangelo, "I will comfort myself by contemplating for at least two hours a day your two drawings . . . which give me even greater pleasure the longer I look at them." Michelangelo's drawings for Vittoria Colonna were of a devotional rather than an erotic nature, but when she examined a sheet as she would an ancient gemstone, her enjoyment took similar form: "It is not possible to see an [illegible] more alive and more [illegible] I have looked at it carefully in [illegible] with the magnifying glass and with the mirror."



THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, PURCHASE, 1924, JOSEPH PULITZER BEQUEST, 24.197.2

***Studies for the Libyan Sibyl* (recto)—androgynous.**

CASA BUONARROTI, FIRENZE/COURTESY NGA, WASHINGTON, D.C. (2)

***Male Nude Seen from Behind*—heroic ideal.**

"He abhorred making a likeness from life."

HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II/COURTESY NGA, WASHINGTON, D.C.

***The Fall of Phaëthon*—"I drew it as best I could."**

Although Michelangelo willingly bestowed such tokens on those he considered *amicissimi*, he could not be persuaded to execute what amounted to a labor of love for a mere patron. Complaining that Michelangelo had not sent him a drawing, the poet Aretino insinuatingly whined, "You should have kept your promise, and with the greatest punctiliousness, in order thus to refute the calumny which asserts that no one can obtain favors from you unless he be a Gherardo or a Tommaso."

As Michelangelo grew old, his graphic concerns slowly shifted to mirror his natural melancholy and mystical yearnings: "I have reached the twenty-fourth hour of my day, and no project arises within my brain which has not the figure of death graven upon it." However, instead of compromising the vibrancy of his draftsmanship, the increasing unsteadiness of Michelangelo's hand enhanced its inherent spiritual qualities. The sheen of his finished studies was gently engulfed, and softened, by a misty *non finito;* the long, serpentine outlines gave way to a gossamer network of short, tremulous strokes. Apprentices watched the eighty-six-year-old master sit sketching, shoeless, for three hours at a stretch. The easy quip that Michelangelo drew in "the difficult manner with the most facile facility" (*la maniera difficile con facilissima facilità*) was now reversed: he had achieved the simple manner through the greatest difficulty. □

***Head of Leda*—one of his workshop assistants.**

Patricia Corbett, Connoisseur's European editor, is working on a catalog of old-master drawings.

CASA BUONARROTI FIRENZE COURTESY NGA WASHINGTON D.C.

Cartoon for a Madonna and Child, **drawn in black pencil and red chalk—one of the most splendid and finished of Michelangelo's surviving drawings.**

BEYOND FASHION

Mary McFadden ransacks the distant past for her timeless evening dresses

By Diane Rafferty

Above: Mary McFadden, who searches other times and cultures for her inspiration. Opposite: From her new Genji collection, a jacket elaborately beaded and embroidered in a paisley motif, worn with pleated marii palazzo pants.

Early Bronze Age clothing preserved for ages in the bogs of Denmark and now displayed at Copenhagen's National Museum is, basically, pure Mary McFadden. The prehistoric T-frame sleeved jacket with embroidery, the long braided cord at the waist, the large hammered-metal disk at the navel, the vertical string skirt, even the remnants of a snood are all signatures of McFadden's designs—if you translate the strings into her trademark, Fortuny-esque pleating.

Mary McFadden may be the only fashion designer who thinks like an anthropologist. Unlike other designers, who strive to come up with something new every year, McFadden looks to the past—ancient history, in fact—for her inspiration and has rarely varied her forms. It is a surprisingly successful approach: McFadden gives new meaning to the American fashion buzzwords "classic," "timeless," and "durable." Gloria Steinem, who collects McFadden evening wear, says, "I like the idea that after I'm gone someone will find something of hers in a thrift shop and be able to wear it."

"I think the simplest things are the most beautiful," says McFadden. "The most refined forms were worked over for hundreds of years to achieve their perfection. They're classic, because we already know they work. The silhouettes—the T-frame, the column, the A-line—were perfected, unlike some of the new silhouettes today that are not yet quite corrected. In understanding so-called primitive people, who evolved these clothes, reading Ruth Benedict's *Patterns of Culture* and Lévi-Strauss was important for me, as were the years I've lived in Africa."

McFadden went to Foxcroft, in Virginia, L'École Lubec, in Paris, the Traphagen School of Fashion, the New School for Social Research, and Columbia University, where she studied anthropology for her sociology degree. In 1965 she moved to South Africa (her husband was a DeBeers executive) and wrote and edited for *Vogue*. McFadden had known *Vogue*'s editor Diana Vreeland since she was a child in Southampton on Long Island, and Vreeland's exuberant global fashion view undoubtedly made its mark on her. In 1968 McFadden moved to Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia), where she founded a sculpture workshop for African artists and helped get their works into museums in Paris and New York. She returned to New York in 1970, serving as special-projects editor at *Vogue*. During her travels, she collected African and Chinese silks and with them made up three tunics for a *Vogue* fashion shoot. Bendel's bought them immediately and commissioned many more from her.

Since she started designing, in 1973, McFadden has presented twice-a-year collections based on an historical culture—Pompeii, Egypt, the twelfth-century world of the Saracen Saladin, that of pre-Columbian Central America. This fall's collection draws from Lady Murasaki's eleventh-century epic *Tale of Genji*, particularly the twelfth-century illustrations attributed to Fujiwara Takayoshi. "It was a great challenge to me," says McFadden. "Japanese culture is the most sophisticated and the one I understood the least. And this period was the most important because the Japanese had just dismissed their Chinese ambassadors. They became very insulated and started developing their own style."

With the Genji collection, McFadden

Photographs by Jean Pagliuso

Right: A halter-top gown whose black-lace bodice is embroidered with a peacock-feather motif. Opposite: Between Japanese garden gates, a pleated gown with a beaded and embroidered bib.

has only come into her own: her preoccupation with the beginnings of a culture, with elaborately feminine indoor dressing, with stark black-and-white outfits, with simple forms (tunic, kimono, fencing jackets, loose, flowing Empire gowns and wide-cut pants), her love of rich, detailed adornment (embroideries, jewel-encrusted bodices, hand-painted motifs on quilted jackets), the whole Vreeland "Japanesey" image, even McFadden's own penchant for white makeup and jet black, geometrically cut hair—all mesh beautifully with the Heian period.

So do the nature-inspired motifs with which she adorns her fabrics. Ornamental figures in the Genji collection include kishi flowers, lotuses, wisteria, golden clouds, thunderbolts, butterflies, snow crystals. McFadden has drawn in the past from Chinese, Burmese, Islamic, and Sanskrit designs. "I use all the symbols of the sun, the moon, the earth, clouds, and sea formations in abstraction," she says. "The spiral as a symbol of life and death. For jewelry, tree-growth symbols, astrological disks. I never use birds, though. They scare some women."

Above: A strapless gown with a beaded and embroidered bodice and pleated skirt. Opposite: A gown with [illegible] that dips to a V in back, [illegible] a ruffled bustle at the waist.

But McFadden is guided by hard-headed practicality, not by the stars. She anchors her fanciful fashion designs in an easily cared-for fabric. It is a concern she has had for years. In the early 1960s, long before Burberry raincoats became as common as blue jeans, she approached Gloria Steinem on a New York bus to ask if she could buy the beat-up British trench coat she was wearing. This very American appreciation of the durable and comfortable is as much a key to her success as her recognition of the need for magic in women's evenings. With her creation of "marii" pleating, McFadden has done for evenings on yachts what Levi Strauss, the jeans man, did for hanging out on campus.

Marii, like denim, travels easily, respects all seasons and climates, and is virtually indestructible. McFadden found the fabric seventeen years ago in Australia. "I took it to Japan to convert," she says, "because at that time it was very difficult to find a good poly that would have the same properties as silk when pleated and still be permanent." Like the Venetian Fortuny's pure, pleated silks, McFadden's polyester satin folds up like a handkerchief, forms a column on the body, and feels like liquid gold. But Fortuny pleating has to be repressed, and silk is perishable. Marii pops back into shape when unfolded. One McFadden devotee finds the dresses perfect for travel. "When you arrive at a hotel and find the steam room closed after four, you're in big trouble—unless you have a personal maid! But Mary's things come out of the suitcase like new."

McFadden has made the material her signature. "She's really taken a stand on this Fortuny-like pleating," says the fashion doyenne June Weir. "And she's developed it. Certainly, Europeans have done crystal pleating since Fortuny, but you identify it today with Mary McFadden."

Her ubiquitous use of marii is encouraged by her studies of women's habits, their need for both comfort and glamour. Unlike many Seventh Avenue designers, who produce for a mass market, or the French, often accused of working in an ivory tower, McFadden keeps her range small—expensive, special-occasion dressing—and, more important, knows her clientele well. "Mary talks to her clients," says Lynn Manulis of Martha on Park Avenue, a salon that has represented McFadden from the start. "She knows what they want and thrives on that feedback."

McFadden's customer is well off, travels a lot, and wants to look educated, feminine, and a little mysterious. Apart from the ever practical Steinem, who finds McFadden too expensive (gowns retail for $2,500 to $3,600) and buys the model's samples at the showroom, McFadden's customers include Patty Hearst, Sigourney Weaver, Margaux Hemingway, and Barbara Walters. "One of the secrets of Mary's success," says Manulis, "is that her clothes work on small figures like Mary's [size 4] and on more ample bodies too."

In many ways, the world traveler Ruthie Leffall, barely five feet tall, who is the wife of Howard University's chief of surgery, LaSalle Leffall, is a typical client. "I hear that this year she's doing something Japanese," she says. "But I don't get that involved in the theme. I tend to want the top from one year and the bottom from another. I remember going to a state dinner in Africa. Before I left, I decided at the last minute to take one of her pleated tops with a little chiffon skirt—a dress from some years ago. And it was just right for the occasion. And all through South America I wore her quilted jacket either over a gown or with a silk skirt of hers. If it was cool, I wore it with a wool skirt. It always worked. And because there's always some interesting detail, you get a compliment. Then you feel much nicer! I have some wonderful pajamas from her first collection. I think they're coming back into style. I'll recycle them."

McFadden is not an innovator in fashion design. She sets herself outside the fashion system and slowly elaborates her original statement, which evolved from studies of "primitive" forms. Like the immensely successful Ralph Lauren, she strives for timelessness. But unlike Lauren, who keeps adding details to a photographic vision of a vaguely prewar English landed gentry, McFadden taps the primordial ooze of fashion and varies the details, drawing from far-flung sources. She puts her creative energies into these details and insists on quality: her embroideries and shadow lace (*chikenwok*) are done in India, colorations in Japan, macramé and tailoring in New York—all under her supervision. She is an individualistic designer, but her designs will never look quaint. McFadden makes clothes to be treasured centuries from now. □

Diane Rafferty is a free-lance writer who lives in New York.

Meet the Boykin spaniel, a nice fellow and a gre

AMERICA'S THIRI

Action at the Carolina Boykin Trial: "Jack" retrieves a live dove decoy under simulated hunting conditions. Such field trials are absolutely necessary if the dog's fine hunting instincts are to survive.

le hunter

OG

Photographs by Bud Lee

By Richard Wolters

If you have never heard of the Boykin spaniel, join the club. He is one of three American-bred working retrievers—the other two are the Chesapeake Bay retriever and the American water spaniel—and blazed onto the hunting scene about a dozen years ago. As retrievers go, the dog is a half-pint. Less than half the size of a Labrador retriever, he weighs in at around thirty-five pounds and stands only some fifteen inches high. Energy? Uncontainable. He is explosive in the field, which endears him to hunters, but is as docile as a lamb around the house. He is also a cute little fellow with big, floppy ears.

The Boykin spaniel is a native of South Carolina—indeed he is the state dog—but no one knows exactly where he came from. His standards were set by committee, in 1977, from a mixed-up background. About most dogs, the data are complete. About the Boykin, they are not. Even the basics, such as what he should look like, are obscure, perhaps beyond retrieval.

The little dog's beginnings are as southern as grits and corn bread. Picture a lazy Sunday morning around 1908 or 1909 on East Main Street in Spartanburg, South Carolina. Alec White, in his late forties, on that particular Sunday was walking to the First Presbyterian Church to meet his family, who had gone on ahead. He noticed, as he ambled, he was being followed by a tiny brownish, or maybe reddish, curly-haired pup. Although he could hear the congregation singing, he stopped, had a one-sided conversation with the little fellow, and gave him a few friendly good-bye pats.

After church—it is believed Alec left early—who was waiting for him but his floppy-eared, newly acquired friend. Man and dog walked together back to 481 East Main for Sunday dinner.

There is nothing unusual about a stray dog's being taken home and becoming a member of the family. What is most unusual is for the stray to be the first of a new breed, since that involves much more than the dog. For the Boykin, the big break was the friendship between Alexander Lawrence White, president of the Farmers and

Above: Owner and dog get ready for a water test. The men admit to making more mistakes than the dogs. Right: Live duck decoys, their wings tied, are used at the trials pictured here, in Wensborough, South Carolina.

Merchants Bank of Spartanburg, and Lemuel Whittaker Boykin, land appraiser and owner of the plantation Pine Grove, about ten miles from Camden and one hundred miles from Spartanburg.

When they were teenagers, both boys courted Lavolette McGowan. They grew up to become keen hunters and conservationists way ahead of their time. As founders of a [illegible] South Carolina Sportsm[illegible] subscribed to mandatory bag limits on tom turkeys, no shooting of hens, and a daily limit on quail—quite an advance for that day. Although they lived many miles apart, Alec White and Whit Boykin hunted together constantly and wrote to each other, regular as clockwork, once a week.

Most important for the Boykin spaniel, the two were members of the southern gentry. That means they had the wherewithal to keep large kennels, the patience and persistence to develop a breed, and the social standing in the community to cause others to emulate them.

During the early part of this century the area of Camden and nearby Boykin Community became popular as a winter resort for the social set. Wealthy Yankees went there to play. Those who loved the outdoor sports sought an invitation from the Boykins to hunt duck on the Wateree River, an activity that came to involve meeting the dog Alex White had adopted.

To use South Carolina's Wateree River—the only thoroughfare through this area of marshes and thickets, rich with game—hunters designed a three-section boat. It could be taken apart and loaded on a wagon or train for transport to and from the river. As the boat was paddled or floated downstream, the waterfowl would flush out of the reeds and foliage, often to be downed farther back in the swamp.

Clearly, a good retriever was a must on the Wateree. In addition, the dog had to

Boy Scout helps scoutmaster tie decoys for the dog trials. The scouts throw the birds from hidden blinds on signal. The Boykin being tested races to find the bird and brings it back.

What Whit Boykin and Alex White longed for was a little dog. They were using Chesapeake Bay retrievers, dogs that weighed up to one hundred pounds and took up scarce space in the wagon, on the train, and, particularly, in the boat. If a Chesapeake shifted position, the hunters were threatened with a dunking and a loss of gear, but a small dog could dive overboard and hardly rock the boat. A small dog, when he swam back to the floating boat with the game in his mouth, could be lifted with one hand, by the scruff of the neck, out of the water and into the boat in one fell swoop. And it just so happened that the pup who came to Alec White's house for Sunday dinner was little.

White named him Dumpy, in fact, because of his small size in comparison with the other retrievers and bird dogs in the kennel. Even so, Dumpy managed to hold his own with the big dogs. White noted that the little fellow had a remarkable aptitude for retrieving anything, whether it was thrown or just something the dog found and carried about in his mouth.

One day in the early 1900s, as a lark, White took Dumpy duck hunting along with his Chesapeakes. Little Dumpy was faster and more agile than the retrievers. Was he the answer to the hunters' needs? Off he went to Whit Boykin, who was an excellent trainer. According to Whit's daughter Wrennie, Dumpy immediately became Papa's favorite and was the only dog who was given Boykin house privileges. He also learned fast.

Whit Boykin was so pleased with Dumpy's work that word was spread to find a suitable, small reddish or brown mate for him. Soon enough, a railroad porter reported a promising female, a curly-haired, dark reddish-brown dog of uncertain breeding who had been left unclaimed at the station. She was sent to Whit Boykin, who named her Singo. The Adam and Eve of the Boykin spaniel met.

Back in those days the Boykin was used primarily as a turkey dog, with the retrieving of ducks on the Wateree River a bonus. The only way to the turkey-hunting grounds was downriver. Once within the area where turkey flocks were known to feed, a line of hunters would spread out through the woods and find concealment behind brush. Then a few hunters with Boykins went downstream and entered the woods, working back toward the guns. The dogs quartering ahead scoured the ground until they detected turkey scent. Working frantically, the Boykins then would flush big birds into the air. If the hunters only wounded the toms, the dogs pursued the downed birds.

The other way the Boykin was used on turkey was "still hunting." The hunter and his Boykin walked through a likely patch until the dog found the scent and flushed the birds in every direction. Once the birds were scattered, the hunter built him-

The Boykin spaniel was developed mainly by Whit Boykin and descendants. Here, Whit's grandson Henry poses with his daughter Alexandra, grandsons, and Dixie and Molly.

self a small blind to conceal himself and the dog. Man and dog had to stay hidden, motionless and absolutely silent except for the turkey-calling device that enticed the birds back to the feeding area. Hunters could teach the dog to sit quietly and watch the birds coming back into gun range, but they could not stop that excited tail from wagging. There was not enough room in a blind for man, dog, and a swishing tail that rustled every twig and leaf within reach. Off came the tail.

That is all we know about the Boykin spaniel's origins. There are no surviving records [illegible] the Boykin family bred him or even a good description of what he looked like. [illegible] family believes for sure [illegible] What put some Chesapeake [illegible] into the mix, and possibly a [illegible] and maybe pointer. The p[illegible] have come down half a century [illegible] inaccurate.

Diligent research on the subject has, to date, produced only two references to the dog in print prior to 1975, when he became popular. In 1943, a visiting hunter, Jack Foster, wrote a two-column story about the Boykin spaniel for Arnold Gingrich, the sportsman editor of *Esquire* magazine. And in 1969, the staff writer on the Spartanburg *Journal*, Bud Seifert, did a series on pets, including one piece on the Boykin. That is all the outside world knew about the Boykin spaniel.

Insiders can divide the dog's history into two distinct eras. The first started with the puppy outside the church in Spartanburg and ended shortly after World War II, when the South Carolina resort lost some of its appeal for the affluent visiting Yankees. Between the two eras was a period, from the late 1940s to the early 1970s, when the dog almost disappeared. This often happens in the dog world. Dogs are like designer clothes: tastes and fads change. Only the Boykin family kept the breed going for their own hunting. Then, as the decade of the seventies began, the dog's future was to change again.

Mike Creel, an outdoors writer with a knack for history, decided that the Boykin would make for a remarkable story. Creel talked to anyone he could find, old or young, who remembered the dog. But he was unable to place the article anywhere, until John Culler, the editor of *South Carolina Wildlife* magazine, saw the potential. He ran it, in the October 1975 issue.

The story tickled the fancy of the South Carolinians. This was their dog! Everybody wanted one. The problem was that some pups, even in the same litter, were curly-coated, some were wavy-coated, and some were smooth-haired. Some pups were leggy; some were short. Most were dark chocolate or rich brown, but some were black or had white markings. The article created a demand from a public that did not even know what the dog should look like. And since few litters were being produced, demand outstripped supply.

"After that *Wildlife* magazine article, pups were selling for as much as two hundred dollars," recalls Peter McKoy, a veterinarian in Camden. "Well, any time the

price of meat goes up fifty percent, you get poachers. That started people thinking, so anything started to pass for Boykins. One woman came into my office with her brown poodle, who by accident had been bred to a Boykin, she thought. There were two brown and two black pups. Six weeks later when she brought the pups in for shots, she had only the two blacks. I asked her where the two browns were, and she said she'd sold them for Boykin spaniels for two hundred dollars each."

Meantime, a few people, including Baynard Boykin, a grandson of Whit's, were doing everything they could to keep the line pure. "If Baynard saw something in a litter that he figured his granddaddy wouldn't be proud of, that animal did not continue on as a breeding animal," says McKoy. "Well, I felt it was not right that, because of demand and money, some folks were destroying the work the Boykins were doing, keeping a line of hunting dogs going. So I contacted Baynard and his cousin Whit. So the idea started to form a club before things got out of hand."

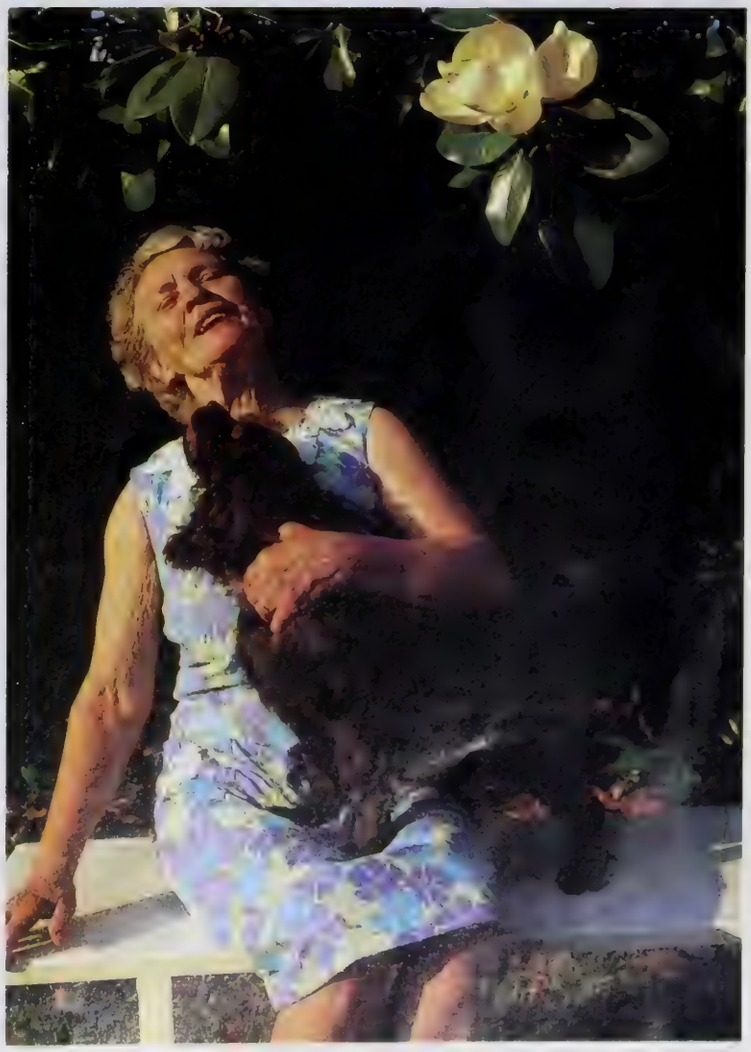
Things were going to get worse before they got better. John Culler left South Carolina to edit the big-circulation *Outdoor Life* magazine. While in New York, he had Mike Creel tell the Boykin story again. Now the dog received national attention. The Boykin and his story were so attractive that in a short time there were Boykins in every state in the Union. Even Culler got one. He says, "Lucky was the best dog I ever had."

But just what was the dog, with its mixture of genes? To provide an answer, the Boykins and a few friends formed the Boykin Spaniel Society, in 1977—only to confront a monumental problem. Those who owned wavy-coated dogs wanted wavy-coatedness as the standard. Those who had curly-coated dogs wanted that. Those who had flat-coated dogs argued that *that* was best. Never before had a dog been defined as a breed until it threw generations of uniformly true litters.

Kitty Beard, a Boykin on her mother's side, was the society's organizer and force behind the scenes. Records went back only to 1940. Kitty wrote letters to everyone she could find in the country who owned a Boykin, and an organization was established, with Peter McKoy acting as referee. The standard the founders wrote for the dog, however, was vague. The wording of the description of the dog's coat, for example, allows everything from a flat to a moderately curly coat.

Today, the society has more than 2,000

Henry Beard and his wife, Kitty, helped found the Boykin Spaniel Society, in 1977, which tried to define exactly how the dog should look. That task, unfortunately, proved to be much more difficult than expected.



"Duck" Ellen Boykin, who married into the family and is an important breeder of the spaniels, was delighted when South Carolina named the Boykin the state dog. Whether he deserves the distinction is another question.

At the end of the field trials, owners and dogs get together to receive the awards. Opposite: The Boykin is blessed with a happy, docile disposition that makes him as popular with mothers as with hunters.

members, with over 6,000 dogs registered, but the dog's problems are far from finished. The Boykin family says that the dog should be a hunter and opposes any suggestion—there are many—to put the dog in the show ring. As Doc McKoy puts it, "We do not want the Boykin to be recognized by the American Kennel Club. We have seen hunting breeds that, after being bred for conformation, lose entirely their hunting instincts. . . . [illegible] pretty show dogs —for example, the poodle, the cocker spaniel, the Irish and the English setters."

What any working breed needs to succeed, and stay a worker, is to keep working. To preserve the hunting instinct, a known gene pool of proven hunters must be available for breeding stock. Until recently, the Boykin Spaniel Society did not seem to be doing enough in this regard, and that caused a splinter group, the Carolina Boykin Spaniel Club, to set itself up to conduct field tests and record field accomplishments on the pedigrees. Better yet, the club has now joined the North American Hunting Retriever Association, a much needed organization that tests a dog against a hunting standard—not through competition between dogs. The standard is written to test dogs in all categories, from ones who are just starting to learn their job, showing native ability, to the finished master retrievers.

The Boykin is in a critical phase of his development. He is becoming a popular little fellow, and that has always spelled trouble for a working breed. It is now up to his champions to keep him working. Otherwise, the dog will be back on the stoop of the Spartanburg church. He will look awfully cute, sitting there, waiting for dinner, wagging the stump of his tail. But he will have forgotten how to hunt. □

Richard A. Wolters is working on a book about waterfowl-hunting dogs, called Duck Dogs, *to be published by E. P. Dutton.*

THE TRUE ORIGINS OF THE BOYKIN SPANIEL

What was the little dog whom Alec White found at the church in Spartanburg? My guess is that he was actually a lost American water spaniel. Even today, eighty-odd years later, the American and the curly-haired Boykin spaniels are in many ways dead ringers for each other. True, the Boykin is a little smaller, he has yellow eyes, and his tail is docked; but they could have started out as the same dog.

The American spaniel was a dog used by the Indians in Wisconsin. After the Civil War, settlers moving West found him and put him to work as their retriever. However, no one outside the Wisconsin inland waterways and the very small area of the Wolf River knew about the dog until about 1920. By 1940 he had become so popular in the West that he was recognized by the American Kennel Club. Those dates became a key factor in this search.

The year 1909 is about when Alec White found Dumpy in Spartanburg, and the same year a physician, Dr. F. J. Pfeifer, started to propagate a pure American water spaniel in Wisconsin. Interestingly, the areas of the Wolf River of Wisconsin and the Wateree River of South Carolina had similar needs for a small hunting dog and retriever. Two small rural areas, widely separated, were simultaneously developing a dog to do similar work. There was no way the Boykin people in South Carolina would have known in 1909 what was happening a thousand miles away in Wisconsin. But when Alec saw Dumpy at work, he could recognize the dog's abilities. Hunting and water retrieving have to be in a dog's genes—those skills do not reflect just luck, especially when they are successfully passed on to their progeny.

Later, when the American water spaniel got his first national attention, in 1940, Boykin owners thought he looked so much like their own dog that they imported Americans for breeding stock, according to R. Arden Lowndes, an old-time breeder from Camden, South Carolina. In 1943, Bolivar DeSaussure Boykin, the son-in-law of Whit, wrote to Driscoll Scanlan, who was the first president of the American Water Spaniel Club. For fifty dollars Scanlan sent two American pups to South Carolina. The male American, named Turk, was used extensively to breed into the Boykin line. Then, in 1951, Arden Lowndes introduced another American water spaniel into his kennel "to strengthen the basic Boykin breeding stock."

From the late 1950s to the late 1960s Joe Tryba and Father Vaughn V. Brockman, two breeders in Wisconsin, sold and shipped American water spaniels to the South. Were their progeny then registered as Boykins? Father Brockman tells a story of a litter born with yellow eyes. Americans have brown eyes. Concerned, he asked another breeder about the matter, only to be told, "Don't worry. We can sell all the yellow-eyed pups to the Boykin breeders. All they do is dock the tail and they then have Boykins."

Historians of the Boykin may have thought that the American was a newly developed dog when it was recognized in 1940 by the AKC. They did not know it had been known for some seventy years, it only in the Wisconsin area.

The differences in looks between the two dogs today might be nothing more than family differences. That prospect, I must say, does not disturb me: they are both fine fellows. But after mulling all this over, I am not sure there is any such thing as a Boykin spaniel! —R.A.W.

ONLY IN L.A.

BY PHIL PATTON

THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM'S NEW JAPANESE PAVILION

With its odd, expressionistic form, the new pavilion fits right into the Los Angeles scene. The roof beams and the translucent panels lend the museum a faintly Japanese air.

It sits like some strange ship at voyage's end, pulled up to a pier, its loading derricks rising against the sky, its hull encircled by boarding ramps, its sails furled about it. The ship is the new Pavilion for Japanese Art at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, a futuristic sampan of a building that could as easily be imagined to have crossed deep space as to have crossed the sea, to be driven by sun as by wind, to have come from Orion as from the Orient. But its port of arrival could only have been Los Angeles, where a door wide open to architectural style is a part of the flourishing art scene as much as of its residential neighborhoods. Anything is tolerated—as long as it is exotic—and "eccentric" is a term of approbation.

In fact, the ship came from Oklahoma, as did a goodly number of earlier Los Angeles immigrants. The museum advertises it as the last design of the late Bruce Goff, the highly unconventional Oklahoma admirer of Frank Lloyd Wright. It is the most striking of the last decade's new museum buildings and additions.

Its berth is beside the museum's promenade—reminiscent of a seaside esplanade with café tables—created in an early-1980s master plan by the Manhattan architecture firm of Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer. The plan uses plazas and a central court to attempt the impossible—that is, to unify LACMA's original buildings (a pair of 1965 classicized structures of the architect William Pereira) with the post-

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TOM BONNER

modern Robert O. Anderson Building, of 1986, which the Hardy firm itself designed, and with the new pavilion. The buildings are too different in style to be easily tied together, but thoughtful use of colors (notably green) and materials (Kalwall, a translucent wall paneling) allows them at least to coexist without strain.

LACMA has the advantage of enough space for all its component buildings. The Japanese-art pavilion is entered off of the central court. Its bow nudges toward the older museum buildings, while the stern, with a rudderlike fin, points east to the La Brea tar pits and their museum, set amid a greensward dotted with sculptures of mammoths. Behind the pavilion, a pit of the raw tar remains open to the air, which it fills with its asphalt fumes.

When Bruce Goff died, in 1982, he left only a rough schematic floor plan of, and an elevation drawing for, the pavilion. The location had not been finalized. The original design was a commission of Joe

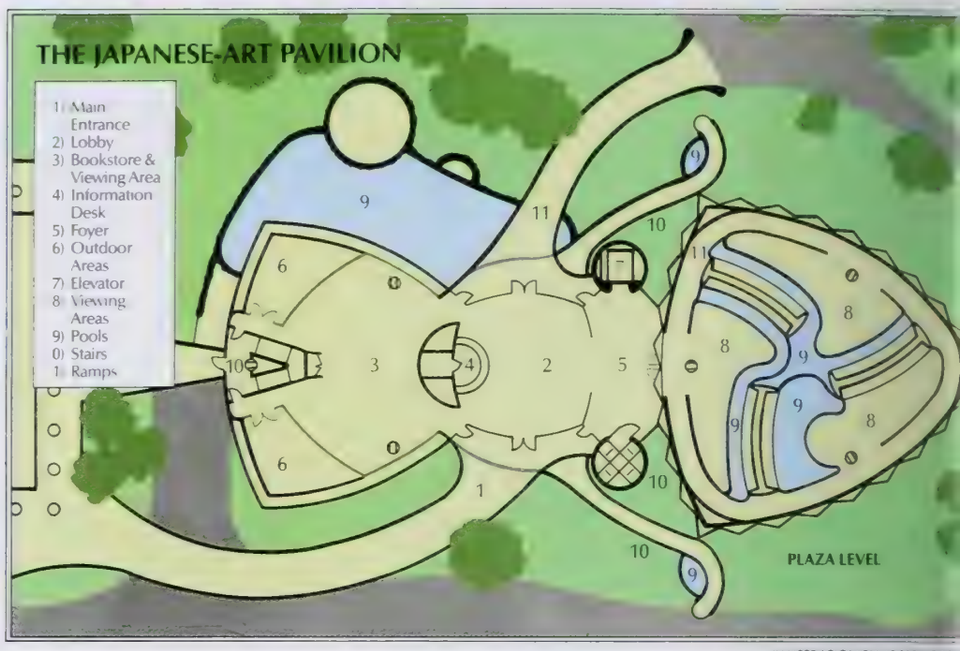


ILLUSTRATION BY JOSEPH PAS

The rugged, rough exterior contrasts with the suave interior. The floor plan shows the pavilion's "wings," one with a flowing ramp.

Price, whose Shin`enkan collection of over 300 screen and scroll paintings will become the chief glory of its interior, and began as an idea for a museum in Price's native Oklahoma.

The two men met in the early fifties at the University of Oklahoma, where Goff taught Joe Price and became his friend. He also suggested that Joe Price's father, Harold, hire Frank Lloyd Wright, whom Goff served as disciple, to design his company's new building. With his father, Price visited Wright at Taliesin in Wisconsin, where the master pulled out a long-shelved skyscraper design planned for New York's Bowery and persuaded the elder Price to construct it.

Harold Price was very proud of the result: the Price Tower, rising above the incongruously flat landscape of Bartlesville, Oklahoma. Joe Price is just as proud of the Japanese-art pavilion; he calls it simply the greatest building in the world.

A lot of credit for the building must be given to Bart Prince, a longtime associate of Goff's, who worked with him on the design and saw it through to completion. He adapted the design to the site and prepared the working drawings, the engineering, the detailing. If Prince is as much the creator as Goff, there is no mistaking Goff's hand in the final, $12.5 million building. Its "organic" curves, masonry-sheathed towers, and suspended roof are clear expressions of the older man's vision. Indeed, he often deployed these and other eccentric forms in his houses in Oklahoma and Texas, as can be seen in a show of his work at LACMA until November 27 and then at the Amon Carter Museum, in Fort Worth (May 20 to July 16).

Before coming to the agreement with LACMA, Price spoke with a number of museums, including New York's Metropolitan, about donating his collection and $5 million toward an appropriate building. Earl Powell, LACMA's director, recalls a visit to Price's farm in Oklahoma, where he saw one of Goff's adaptations of the traditional Japanese *tokonoma*—a type of curved alcove. The architect had set it in the huge barn that was turned over the pavilion project.

Powell bristles at published asserti that the gift of the Price collection w contingent on construction of the bui ing. LACMA's Japanese collections, argues, were well respected before Pric was even a glimmer in the trustees' ey They include a fine permanent collecti of Buddhist sculpture, Zen painting, a ceramics as well as several hundred hi quality netsuke sculptures recently don ed by Raymond and Frances Bushell. St the prospect of acquiring the Price scre and scrolls, along with the Goff design the pavilion, must have been a power inducement for LACMA.

The Japanese collections are n well and safely housed—the pa ion is reinforced to withstand jolt of severe earthquakes—in t distinct wings. A visitor to the w wing will find the permanent collect there, with the netsukes on the grou level and a library for scholars below. T Price collection takes up the entire wing, which is served by a continuo meandering ramp. From the ramp, visitor can thus see these marvels from s eral vantage points, including, of cou close up. The scrolls, which demand s tiny, are mounted on the convex sid the curved *tokonomas*, and the screen the concave one.

Inside, the museum suggests a so antiphonal response to the Guggenh Museum, designed by Wright, in Man tan. There are similarities in the buildi

Visitors see the collection of screens and scrolls in special *tokonomas*, alcoves with curved walls, from many vantages on a free-form ramp.

soft plastered corners, in the open central spaces, ramps, and levels. But the feel of the space is very different—soft and hovering and more intimate. The whole interior, with its masterfully rendered light yellow plastering, appears to have been sculpted out of French-vanilla ice cream and shapes the air inside it into a cool, soft atmosphere—sweet-feeling and soundless except, as you descend, for the plash of a fountain and its black-lined pools.

There is something overly flashy about parts of the structure—a Buck Rogers sense to such details as the porthole-shape lights or the clear-acrylic baluster panels on the ramps. The wonderful elevator is like a polished metal airlock on a space station. At night, when the quarter-sphere milk-glass lamps tucked into the corners of the Kalwall panels are turned on, says Earl Powell, "then it really looks like it came from Mars." Such a design is not objectionable in itself—this is L.A., remember—but it often seems at war with the more sedate Japanese elements.

Of those elements, the most striking are the two curved triangular arrangements of box beams from which the building's roof is suspended. They also have a practical rationale, says Bart Prince: to reduce the need for interior columns and so to provide wall space with as little blockage as possible to natural light. By evoking traditional Japanese architecture, they also recall the Japanese master Kenzo Tange's enlargements of such elements in his famous, brawny facilities for the Tokyo Olympics in 1964.

Because it is set in Los Angeles, the building brings to mind a variety of local associations that neither Goff nor Prince intended. "People have all sorts of reactions to the building," concedes Earl Powell. "Some think it is very fifties." The suspended roof and concrete curves also inevitably evoke any number of Los Angeles car washes, gas stations, and burger joints. To others, the suggestion is of the thirties and such shipshape local structures as the streamlined moderne Pan-Pacific Auditorium or the ocean liner–like Coca-Cola building. The lesson is that any building dropped into the melting pot of Los Angeles architecture absorbs some gravy.

Goff and Prince may have succeeded too well in their ambition to "treat the art as client" and design from the inside out: the exterior is not entirely resolved. The disparately sized Kalwall panels—made of spun fiberglass sandwiched in two-inch-thick pieces—whose deployment makes sense in getting light to the interior, seem from the outside almost crazily angled, like sound speakers of various sizes and functions grouped on a stage.

The farther you get inside the building, the better it gets. In the subground study center, where scrolls and screens rest between brief exposures to light in high-tech racks, the floor is inset with a small carpeted recess in the floor—a Japanese *kotatsu*, or sunken scholar's table. The shape—a triangle crossed with a circle—replicates the shape in which the suspending beams are arranged. It is a shape like that of the cross section of an electric-motor armature and, in its quiet, stands as the building's secret and motive core. □

Phil Patton is writing a book about American design and technology.

The Best Ballet Class in the World

Balanchine's way and Baryshnikov's

By Anita Finkel

Anyone with a leotard and eight dollars to spend can walk into a ballet class in a commercial dance studio and find some of the atmosphere and magic of ballet. What a real dancer calls "class" is the exclusive preserve of professionals. Company class—the daily workout and practice session for the members of a ballet company—is the place where morale is strengthened, where problems are faced and individuals find their place in the organization's structure. A cross between a corporate meeting and an athletic scrimmage, class creates the foundation whereon an artistic identity rests.

During our century, company class has become more important than ever. The late George Balanchine, the choreographer and founder of the New York City Ballet, took class to the highest level ever achieved. Today, with Balanchine gone, the process is, inevitably, in a phase of redefinition. Meanwhile, for this country's other great classical troupe, American Ballet Theatre, a long tradition of laissez-faire has become untenable. Happily, Mikhail Baryshnikov, the artistic director of American Ballet Theatre, is expending tremendous energy and attention on improving company class and using it, as Balanchine did, to heighten the dancers' professionalism and expressiveness.

The roots of modern company class lie in the 1800s, in the *classe de perfection* of the Imperial Ballet of St. Petersburg, where the theater's finest dancers worked with its best teachers. Artistic revolutionary that he was, when Serge Diaghilev took the Ballets Russes to Paris, in 1909, he brought that cornerstone with him. The ballet master Enrico Cecchetti was as vital to the organization as were Nijinsky, Pavlova, or the choreographer Fokine.

Class then and class now begins with the idea of taking the body, each day, through the complete syllabus of the dancer's technique. Beginning with slow stretches and exercises with the support of the barre, the program leads to triumphant, exhausting jumps

Anita Finkel is publisher of the New Criterion Review.

PAUL KOZNIK

Class must provide both stru

In shorts: Sean Lavery, a great teacher for the New York City Ballet, post-Balanchine.

d freedom. Rote work is not the point.

and diagonals across the floor. The progression is prescribed. First come, at the barre, *pliés* (knee bends), *tendus* (small leg stretches), *ronds de jambe* (hip rotations), and *développés* (high leg stretches); next, still at the barre, are *frappés* (small scissoring motions) and *battements* (high kicks). These exercises are then repeated "in the center," away from the barre, as preparation for the *grand allegro*, large combinations of jumps and turns using the full space of the studio.

In practice, the full program is rarely achieved. Student dancers need about eight years to master it all. And once dancers are hired by companies like ABT or NYCB, they select from the standard class those exercises and routines that help them in their ultimate goal—dancing on the stage.

Professional dancers do not obediently and passively move through class on automatic pilot. Class presents a daily test of a dancer's comprehension of ballet technique in the abstract and his conformity to it in practice. Rote work is not the point. Company class has to provide sufficient structure while allowing sufficient freedom for self-direction.

Understanding all this better than anyone else, George Balanchine deliberately overturned the traditional conceptions. He telescoped the conventional ninety minutes into an hour; he reduced the barre portion—generally a good forty-five minutes—to about twenty minutes. Most striking, he threw out the systematic run-through. His class was designed to shake dancers up, to sharpen their mental as well as their physical faculties. He was always a controversial teacher. The high-strung Gelsey Kirkland charged in her candidly best-selling autobiography *Dancing on My Grave* that Balanchine's class destroyed dancers [illegible] like Edward Villella [illegible] with Balanchine through [illegible] for years rejected not to take Balanchine's class.

But the record shows that for many dancers, Balanchine's class was the ladder to greatness. "It's just too bad that it was the first thing in the morning," says Sean Lavery, a dancer who joined NYCB as a member of the corps de ballet late in Balanchine's life and quickly became one of the company's leading dancers. "A lot of people used to get there at nine o'clock and do a complete class and then do his ten-thirty. Balanchine was the first to admit that that's not the only class you should take." Sally Streets Nichols, a dancer in NYCB in the 1950s who has since taught for the company on several occasions, agrees: "It wasn't the most comfortable class. The whole class would be only *frappés* or only *tendus*—one thing. But you'd do it in many ways, many rhythms—it was very revolutionary."

Maria Calegari, prized for her reimaginings of repertoire roles in which balletomanes would not have expected surprises, has vivid memories of the elite classes Balanchine offered his rising ballerina prospects. "One day we would come in and he'd say, 'Do the step this way.' And we'd spend twenty minutes doing the step that way. And the next week he'd come in and he'd say, 'Do the step this other way.' You cannot approach everything the same way at every given moment. You have to be very flexible, and there is no 'right' way. He was trying to teach us to think for ourselves."

Balanchine was adamant on one point. Whereas other ballet masters let women take class in soft slippers (most women choose not to wear toe shoes except for brief excursions in the center), Balanchine made them wear toe shoes for the entire class. Where practice clothes were concerned, he left them wide [illegible]. (As students, of course, they had had to appear in regulation leotards.) He objected only if the dancers' bodies were obscured by too much bulky, concealing clothing. During company class today, you will see, as he might have, shoulder bags bulging with wooden foot rollers, stacks and stacks of the paper towels dancers wrap their feet in, sweaters in colors from silver to magenta, scarves by the yard, Walkmans, practice skirts, and armfuls of toe shoes, which they change as the class progresses and with which they mark and adorn their territory. "Toe shoes are a very personal thing," says Kyra Nichols, one of NYCB's reigning ballerinas. "You never know what you'll feel like wearing."

Mr. B.'s class: for many dancers the ladder to greatness.

It is assumed that the dancer knows best. While dancers are expected to be in class (though no roll call is taken), once they get there they are left alone. Nichols remembers when she was a new, utterly mystified member of NYCB's corps de ballet. "Mr. B. had a way of telling stories," she says. "If you could pick up on what he was saying, you'd learn what the correction was." Nichols was lucky. Jacques d'Amboise, one of the senior principal dancers, drew her to the side of the room and gave her a kind of private class within the class; this was perfectly acceptable.

For a teacher who is not Balanchine, the creative disorder in the studio can be intimidating. Still recovering from neurosurgery for a spinal tumor that has kept him off the stage since last year, Lavery has become one of NYCB's most popular and successful teachers. "I've been in the back of the room dishing the teacher for too many years to go stand up there in front and teach," Lavery said when first approached by NYCB's head to take over company class. But the work has proved fulfilling. He is careful to speak to the dancers as adults. "This always bothered me when I was in company class. Teachers would talk to us like we were four. 'Keep your tummy in!' I talk to them like they had a brain. I try to keep in mind what the dancer needs more than what I want to see. Sometimes I look in the back of the room and I see some of these exercises and I just think, 'I don't know what you're doing, but knock yourselves out.'"

Five years after Balanchine's death, the atmosphere in his company's studio is almost one of equality between dancer and teacher. New dancers absorb the mentality of self-direction from their seniors. This, perhaps more than anything else, perpetuates Balanchine's spirit. But as NYCB copes with the difficult legacy of the most sophisticated company class in history, ABT under Mikhail Baryshnikov has the opposite problem. Prior to Baryshnikov's administration, company class at ABT was regarded as something of a joke; all the important dancers looked for mentors—David Howard, Maggie Black—outside.

When Baryshnikov took over, in 1980, one of his top priorities was to give his foundering company a distinctive style. He discouraged the attending of classes outside the company, to the point that, today, ABT dancers who study outside are reluctant to admit it and refuse to credit any unaffiliated teacher as instrumental to their development.

Baryshnikov has chosen Jürgen Schneider as the chief company teacher; sometimes, when the class is divided into a men's class and a women's class (a traditional Russian distinc-

tion), Elena Tchernichova or Marina Stavitskaya teaches the women. Born in East Germany, Schneider received early ballet training there based on the Russian syllabus and then went to Moscow to work at the Bolshoi. After emigrating to the West, he coached in Munich and Stuttgart before coming to ABT as a ballet master, in 1975.

As the year goes by, he adapts his class to the dancers' needs. For the first rehearsals of a new season, when the dancers are full of energy, he pushes them to the limit; later, when they are performing, he eases up. At the tail end of ABT's annual tour, class is, he says, "basically a massage."

Schneider's class is traditional and exhibits the traditional discipline. Early departures to rehearsal are not uncommon, but, barring such conflicts, everyone present is expected to follow through each element of technique. No one would get away with composing a routine of his own in the back row to the sounds of his Walkman. Schneider gives many personal, individual corrections. "We have a different understanding of this," he says, as all his charges—from new corps member to seasoned principal—execute a *rond de jambe*. Just as they did in school, they stop for the teacher's demonstration and try again. Schneider focuses on one woman swaddled in leg warmers and sweaters. "I can't see what you're doing," he complains, and she admits, "That's the point." But not of ABT's company class.

Company class is most crucial for the junior corps dancers. Principals and stars generally hang back in class; experience tells them what they need, and they have nothing to prove. Senior corps dancers, no longer thinking in terms of promotions, work at the level of their established ability. For new company members, who as yet have little opportunity to show themselves off onstage, class is the place to display technique, dedication, and commitment. As star students in a dance academy, they strove to please a teacher; now, they must find themselves as professionals. Each needs a mentor—someone who can answer their questions. In the bad old days, they had only one another. Now, they turn to Schneider.

Jeremy Collins, a dancer in ABT's corps, came from the NYCB-affiliated School of American Ballet and had to make many adjustments. "It was a completely different way of working the legs," Collins says of ABT. "And also the *port de bras*"—the use of the arms and the upper body. "They were very lax about that at SAB. All that really mattered were pretty, fast legs and feet. I danced with my shoulders up by my ears. Jürgen worked with me on the side, and he would coach me specifically."

This kind of attention has gone far to realize Baryshnikov's objectives. Still more important has been his own example. Like everyone else, he comes to class regularly, either as a student or as a teacher. When he is there, dancers do not skip out to rehearsal after the easy parts. They may sit out some big jump combinations, but they stay and watch with an air of respect. Dancers in company class at ABT are not in the world of their peers or a world of their own; they are in Baryshnikov's world.

To see him teach is to see perfection radiating outward to perfect others. One morning during ABT's latest New York season found Baryshnikov at the head of a line of stars including Julio Bocca, Danilo Radojevic, and Farukh Ruzimatov and Altynai Assylmuratova, two guests from his former home company, Lenin-

MARTHA SWOPE

Balanchine leads class, 1964. Quiz: Identify Patricia Wilde, Kay Mazzo, Maria Tallchief, Suzanne Farrell, Melissa Hayden, Jacques d'Amboise.

[illegible] Kirov Ballet. The barre culminated, as tradition dictates, with a sequence of *frappés*, sharp, swift beats of the lower leg controlled by iron strength in the unmoving thigh. Next to Baryshnikov's immaculate execution, even that of his superb colleagues seemed lacking in definition.

As a teacher, Baryshnikov functions as much more than a

ABT's ballet master Jürgen Schneider, trained in Moscow.

symbolic point of reference. Where Balanchine explored ballet syntax by focusing on different, anatomized, isolated aspects, and then joining these back into the flow of movement, Baryshnikov's fluency with ballet language finds within the traditional framework new, unexpected, and surprising possibilities.

Although Baryshnikov does not break with the orthodox as Balanchine did, his class is anything but drily "by the book." He does not hesitate to throw the dancers exercises out of the blue that demand both mental and physical dexterity. That morning last season, he pushed them to [illegible] in a [illegible] way. [illegible] trying to change direction [illegible] quick weight, they all [illegible] again, [illegible] struggling [illegible] exposed [illegible]

the oddball exercise and then slipped back into the familiar with a fresh outlook.

Baryshnikov's class is painstakingly thorough; it observes every technical distinction and refinement, and it is very strikingly the product of a single consciousness shaping the range of material into an orderly, sophisticated, and mature system. His understanding of dance goes beyond the equipment he acquired back at the Kirov, in the Soviet Union. Nothing could throw the matter into sharper relief than the visit by Assylmuratova and Ruzimatov. Brought in as guest stars for Natalia Makarova's production of *La Bayadère,* these exemplars of the Kirov style as it exists today came to Baryshnikov's class and were held up to tough scrutiny. He took the Russian pair in hand, introduced them to the company, and worked alongside them in the class.

He seemed particularly caught up with the twenty-four-year-old Ruzimatov. Throughout class, he would call him aside to smooth out the exaggerated "Kirovisms" of his style: the thrown-out chest, overcrossed *passé* in pirouettes, turned-in position of the foot in multiple turns. In every instance, he told Ruzimatov something he desperately needed to hear. It seemed to give Baryshnikov great satisfaction to work as a teacher with such highly developed material. An onlooker could not help thinking of Baryshnikov's own legendary teacher Alexander Pushkin, whose list of alumni includes such legendary dancers as Yuri Soloviev and Rudolf Nureyev.

Though the public never sees it, a great ballet company is its company class. The present state of both ABT and NYCB proves it. With a history that includes the highest and finest class that ever existed, NYCB is now faced with the need to preserve the best of its heritage. As for ABT, under Baryshnikov, for the first time, it has something to lose.

Though the public never see[illegible]

Baryshnikov's example, as a teacher and as a dancer, has transformed ABT's company class.

great ballet company is its company class.

The artist, 1944. His desire: to hide and to display.

PICASSO'S

FORGET HUFFINGTON; THIS IS HOW THE

BY JANET HOBHOUSE

There is no twentieth-century artist about whom we have been told so much and yet know so little as Pablo Picasso. In photographs and full-length films, in critical and biographical studies, in memoirs both hagiographic and spiteful, the artist has been documented. He is quite likely the most documented of modern artists, the most universally renowned, and until his death, in 1973, among the most visible. Accounts of him exist through eight decades of a peculiarly art- and fame-obsessed century. The most famous photographers of several eras have fixed him for us. And we could recognize the artist from a close-up of one fierce eye or by his naked boxer's torso or striped *matelot* shirt, even from under a papier-mâché mask or the skull and horns of a bull. Again and again he has been presented to us, whole or in pieces, but always displaying the solidity of a monument. And yet, underneath the monument, which is a monument to the obfuscating nature of celebrity itself, the true character of the man and artist remains as inaccessible and vague as the documents of the life and work are over-[illegible] and clear.

The distance between Picasso and us—the contemporary—by the perceiver, the [illegible] who proceeds to [illegible] an [illegible] scale of [illegible] meaning, purpose and [illegible]. The [illegible] monolithic [illegible]

La Vie (ca. 1904). An obscure sym[illegible] sense of weighty and final understandings.

NUDES

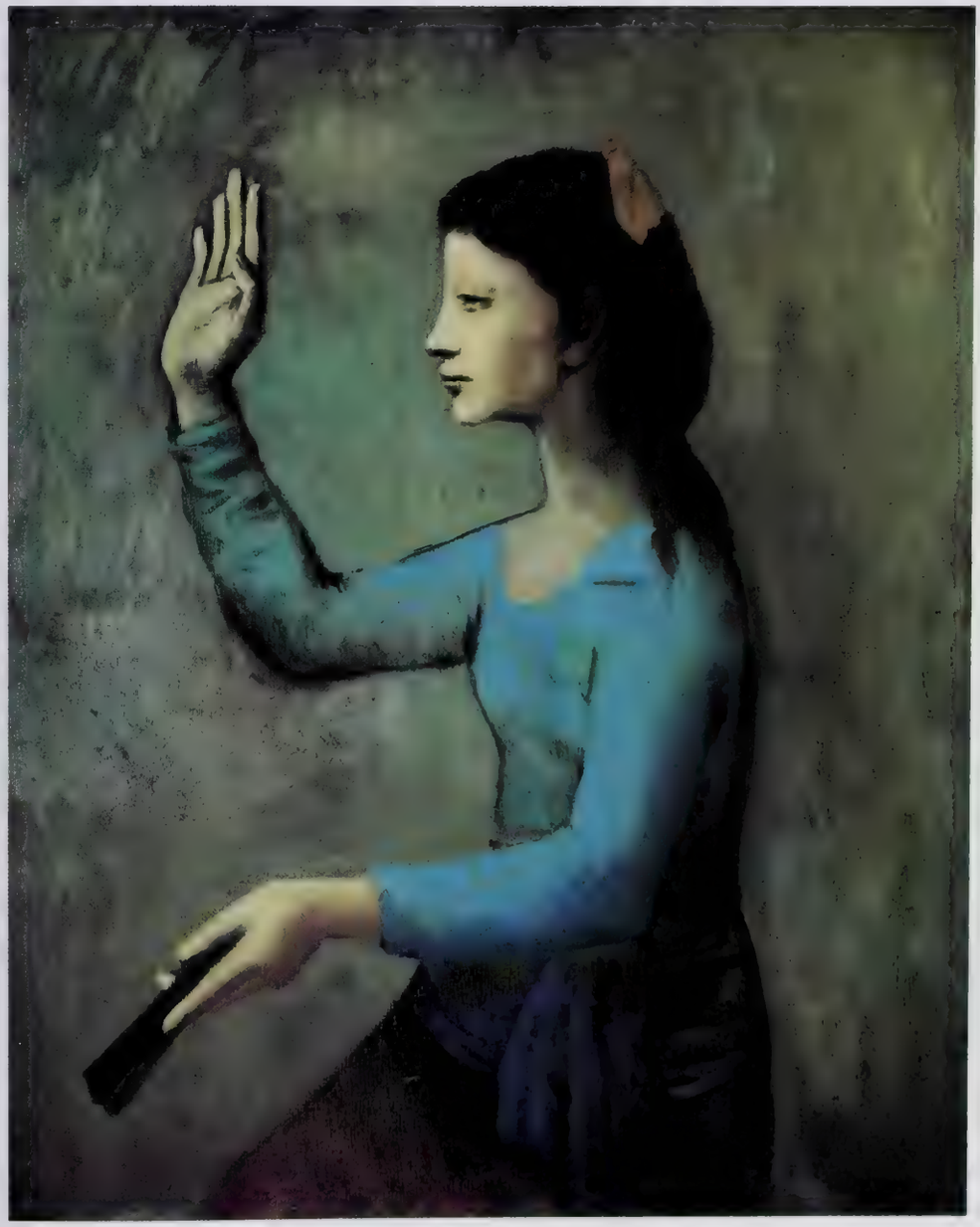
MASTER USED THE FEMALE IMAGE

safe and unknowable and explains the lack of intimacy in his work, even when the work pertains to "intimate" things.

There is something both boastful and suspicious in his manner, so that our admiration for the master technician and paragon of creative and physical energy fails to extend to the private man. He is one of those artists everyone acknowledges to be great yet few are moved by.

Picasso's own voice and drama ought to be easier to recognize. The preoccupations of his art were consistent: sex, death, war, procreation, and creativity. One could stage a Picasso play without once mentioning the artist's name, merely by presenting the familiar cast of characters: harlequin, acrobat, Minotaur, nude, ape, horse, owl, goat, male child in Pierrot suit, female child with bouquet, a dwarf, a crone, Rembrandt, a prostitute in an African mask, Gertrude Stein, Apollinaire, a shepherd, a guitar player, a bullfighter, a pipe smoker, a circus rider, and, in their various guises and art-historical manners, of course, Fernande, Olga, Marie-Thérèse, Dora, Françoise, and Jacqueline.

The work itself is theatrical—symbolically and poetically scenic in the blue period, augustly dramatic in the rose, where the figures have the frozen-narrative or tableau quality of neoclassical history painting. Posing—staging—is characteristic of Picasso's art, whether the subject is human or still life (those bottles confronting guitars are actors in a theatrical moment), whether the manner is cubist, neoclassical, or surrealist. Throughout, there is a tendency to combine elements of action with mystery, ritual, or myth, particularly in the later work.



NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, WASHINGTON. GIFT OF THE AVERELL HARRIMAN FOUNDATION IN MEMORY OF MARIE N. HARRIMAN

***Lady with a Fan* (1905). A deadly stillness and petrified dignity.**

There is a preponderance of masks and costumes, "scenes" from the worlds of performance: the circus and the ballet, the *corrida*, the public life of the beach. There are platforms and raised curtains (for example, in *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* and *The Women of Algiers*), dramatic lighting, stylized gestures. The artist offers not just himself as performer, but also his figures and favorite objects. We feel the presence of the mask or costume in the sheer rhetoric of the paint that comes between them and us. Picasso's subjects have the artist's desire to perform, that is, simultaneously to hide and display. The presentation is a demand for a particular kind of attention, which insists that we see and applaud but not get too close. Intimacy is not on offer. We are asked to remain in our seats.

"Americans . . . are like Spaniards," Gertrude Stein wrote. "They are abstract and cruel." And both these qualities underlie Picasso's detachment. They are basic to the two strands in his work: the theatrical and violent on the one hand, and the coolly analytical on the other. A certain heartlessness was necessary to make a conceptual leap of the kind cubism represents, and beyond that, to push the cubist discoveries in otherwise taboo areas: the human body, for example, which in cubism is chopped up and rearranged with chilling if by now familiar determination.

***Two Nudes* (late 1906). Reflections of Stein?**

In later work, it enabled Picasso to pursue his basically analogical mode of thought, in which not only objects and figures appear in the guise (or costume) of other objects and figures (bathers look like squids, guitars like vaginas, and so on) but in which situations themselves can shift their emotional content and significance with unnerving ease: scenes of lovemaking become scenes of carnage, and vice versa (see *The Charnel House*). "Cruelty" and "abstraction" granted Picasso the freedom to violate not only the accepted forms for representing appearance but, equally, our notions of what must be good and what bad, as in his refusal to differentiate between a rape and an embrace (passim), a dance and a crucifixion (see *The Dance* of 1925). Notions of cruelty and abstraction also explain that other streak in Picasso's work, the frankly sentimental and poetic, since these are only further versions of heartlessness—kinds of expression where love of the real is absent.

Picasso loves costume, mask, and symbols; he loves appearance; but that is not the same as loving the real, of which his art is highly suspicious. He is continually announcing his independence from the world of phenomena, his contempt for first impressions, by [illegible] demonstrations of his freedom to challenge and [illegible] appearance. "Painting [illegible] a question of sensibility," he once [illegible] said, "not a matter of seeing the [illegible] from nature [illegible] not expecting [illegible] information and [illegible]

said, "They speak of naturalism in opposition to modern painting. I would like to know if anyone has ever seen a natural work of art. Nature and art, being two different things, cannot be the same thing. Through art we express our conception of what nature is not." Picasso displays no reverence for his subjects but rather the intellectual curiosity of the brilliant child, the showiness of an autocratic ego, the "detachment" of the tyrant. That detachment enabled him to create profound revisions of the female form, not just in certain astounding works like *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon,* but in many other, later works, which acceptance of the proto-cubist masterpiece made more accessible.

The nude, generally speaking, is a genre where the more conventional and "reality"-respecting art manners obtain. Generally, too, it is the most self-revealing part of an artist's oeuvre, a form of sometimes involuntary autobiography. But in Picasso's nudes, as throughout his work, the public manner dominates, and the bravado presentation. Françoise Gilot, Picasso's mistress, said that Picasso had only two ways of treating women: as either goddesses or doormats. Actually, "goddesses and land mines" would be a closer description. His most famous nudes, whether the style is allegorical or mechanistic, poetical or grossly material, are public icons. They are divas and show-stoppers, Trilbys behind whom the Spanish Svengali lurks, jealous, protected, and invisible.

Whatever the size of the canvas, Picasso's nudes feel monumental. An early work like *La Vie* of 1903, painted when the artist was twenty-two, is nothing if not grand in its presentation and rhetoric. An obscure symbolism, a sense of weighty and final understandings adhere to the image. The figures relate to one another and, of course, to the title, like characters in a morality play. Here Picasso presents nakedness almost as a costume for a masque. Though through the color of the painting, the woman's pose, and the presence of the second woman's cloak we feel the physical attributes of her nakedness—above all, the vulnerability to cold—we are also aware that nakedness is a part of the allegorical rendering and helps to represent the qualities of youth, sexuality, or virginity, qualities that are troubled or doomed, as the accompanying sketches on

***Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* (1907). Is the viewer being challenged, seduced, or ignored?**

the wall of naked, sorrowful, and huddling figures make clear.

Sexual tension, which is here barely suggested, was a consistent element in Picasso's depiction of couples in the blue and rose periods, particularly in those family groups of saltimbanques where figures sit at odd physical and psychological distances from one another, and where often the image of an ape is included like an emblem of animal nature and unconstrained sexuality from which the human subjects refrain. It is, too, in this rose period that the theme of disconnection and longing first enters Picasso's work in the form of images of dressed males appraising sleeping or indifferent, mostly naked, females. Such images were to reappear in Picasso's work of the thirties, where the male figure may be a faun or a Minotaur, and later, in the forties, where the sleeper is male and the watcher female. Picasso himself always preferred to be awake at night and often took long walks through the city. Roland Penrose refers to "these nocturnal wanderings" as a lifelong habit: "Picasso enjoyed the sensation of being conscious when others were asleep; it felt like a triumph over death." It probably also felt like a physical assertion of the artist's role to be conscious when and where others were not, and by that consciousness to know himself separate from them.

Despite its name, there is nothing particularly cheerful about the rose-period paintings, except the frequency of circus costumes and the pastel coloring. In works where groups of figures are presented, the mood is of disconnection, every bit as bleak as that suffered by the hungrier and colder figures of the preceding, blue era. Even where the subjects are solitary, there is a deadly stillness about them, frozen gestures, and the petrified dignity of Egyptian tomb painting, as in the mysteriously gesturing, hieratic figure of *Lady with a Fan* of 1905.

COLLECTION MRS. VICTOR W. GANZ

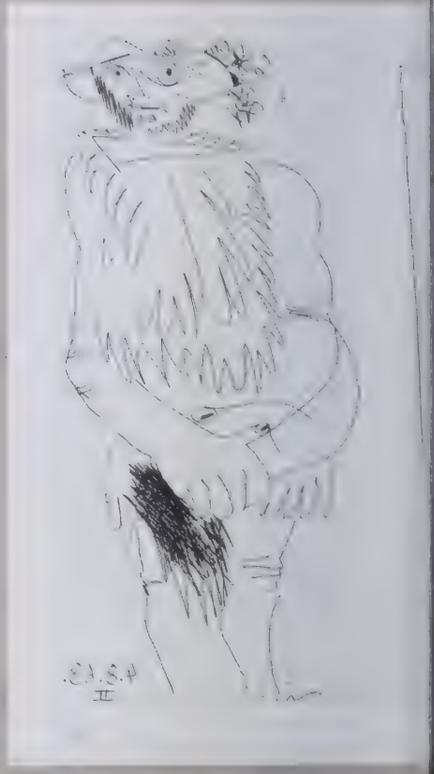
***Woman in an Armchair* (1913). Invaded, deconstructed, reduced, and disrespectfully reassembled.**

It was about this time that Picasso stopped telling stories in his painting, however imbued with mystery. Female appearance rather than behavior or literary association begins to be the subject of his paintings of women, and, in particular, aspects of size: body mass and weight, rendered as solid fields of flesh. No longer underfed, vulnerable, or even seductive, the nudes of 1905–06 are dauntingly, even comically, sturdy. Although Picasso had painted at least one unusually ample nude by this time, the very Flemishly pink and iridescent *Dutch Girl* (*La Belle Hollandaise*) of 1905, it was not until after the *Portrait of Gertrude Stein* that the physical characteristics of his nudes changed markedly. According to Stein, Picasso had not painted from the model for eight years when he asked her to sit for him during the winter of 1905–06. She posed for him, she claimed, some eighty times before the summer of 1906, when Picasso, in exasperation, painted out the features of her face and went off to Gosol, in Spain. On his return to Paris that autumn, he imposed on the blank face the mask features he had seen on Iberian statues while away. The importance of Stein's portrait as a forerunner for elements in *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*, and therefore as a herald of cubism, has tended to overshadow other aspects of the work. But it seems to me that the actual size, bulk, and character of his subject, stared at eighty times over an entire winter and spring, impressed an image on Picasso's mind. Reflections of Stein appear in three paintings of 1906: *Seated Female Nude with Crossed Legs*, *Two Nudes* (whose squat firmness has been attributed to the influence of Iberian sculpture), and even *Young Nude Boy*—which looks like a Picasso self-portrait as Gertrude Stein. None of the female figures is voluptuous in the Rubens or Courbet manner. The massive flesh is asexual, as solid and monu-

IN DRAWING AFTER DRAWING OF HIS LAST TWO DECADES

ART RESOURCE, N Y (2)

347 Series: No. 237, etching, 1968.



347 Series: No. 241, etching, 1968.

mental as a boulder, and it seems to me that the body type and perhaps the unselfconscious and androgynous character of Gertrude Stein lie behind these emanations in the nudes that immediately followed Picasso's portrait of her.

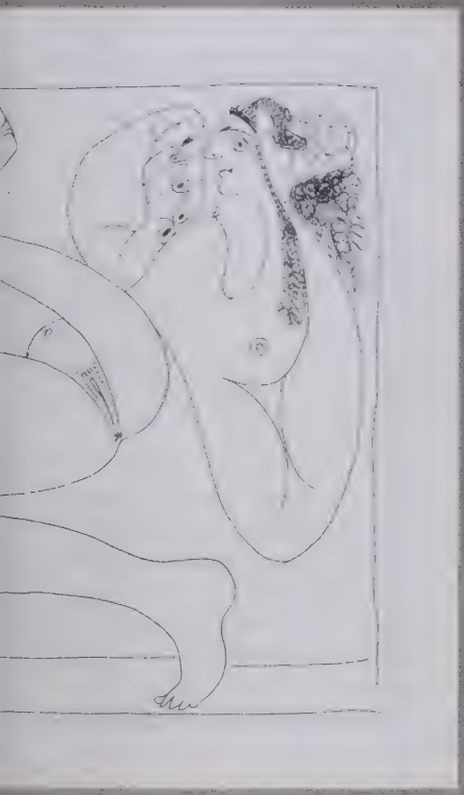
The depictions of huge female body mass did not end at this point in Picasso's art. There are giantesses with doelike, Raphael eyes in the work of the early twenties and, a decade later, bathers as blown up as their beach balls, and further experiments to see how far female flesh could be stretched before it lost its female recognizability. But the line of squat denizens that may have been influenced by Gertrude Stein ends around 1907, as Picasso moved toward cubism.

The [illegible] of *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* [illegible] been easy to read. The [illegible] being an [illegible] and reference to [illegible] (Avinyo, Avignon Street) in [illegible] Barcelona, sur- [illegible] sexual [illegible] great [illegible] are flamboyant [illegible] extreme letters [illegible] "Lesption," hint [illegible] some house of the dead. But the two ladies in the center, lifting their arms behind their heads the better to display their breasts, engage in traditional gestures of sexual enticement. The disheveled sirens on the right are beyond such genteel, ritualized erotic behavior. The standing figure seems about to hurtle into the room like a Cassandra with bad tidings. The remaining figure squats in the posture of defecation, twisting her head over one shoulder to stare. The *Demoiselles* is not a brothel snapshot. Rather, it is something closer to a formal portrait, but one with such a mixture of crude and genteel posing that the viewer is uncertain whether he is being challenged, seduced, or ignored. Most of the painting's first viewers were simply alarmed, and alarm may still be the most appropriate response. The *Demoiselles d'Avignon* has a kind of circus bravado about it, a savage theatricality in its raised curtains and erotic flaunting, its huge, staring eyes, even in its blatant (shocking) pinkness, which makes this work, perhaps more than the [illegible] images of saltimbanques, the [illegible] tribute of Picasso's evening excursions to the Cirque Medrano.

The *Demoiselles d'Avignon* was Picasso's first artistic response to female sexual aggression. With the advent of cubism, the emphasis in his art shifts from what is being looked at to who is doing the looking, and how. The object, particularly the female object, becomes a kind of provocation in the assertion of its integrity and inviolability. With cubism, Picasso literally squared off and took the measure of what was in front of him, in order to penetrate, reduce, dismantle, and then reassemble the object to suit his own vision of reality. Initially, the cubist researches were made in a spirit of scientific investigation. Gradually, however, Picasso's stance toward the object became increasingly combative, and his painting, as he said, "a sum of destructions." Power over the object, and the demonstration of Picasso's ability to overpower it without destroying its recognizability or essential nature, became the focus of his art.

The cubist experiment with the indecisiveness of appearance, the shiftiness of forms, and the inequality of parts was eventually to serve Picasso's analogical (proto-surrealist) vision and, above all, its wit and playfulness. *Woman in an Armchair*

ICASSO DEPICTS HIMSELF AS WOOING THE LADY.



GALERIE LOUISE LEIRIS, PARIS

Untitled etching (April 1, 1971), II.

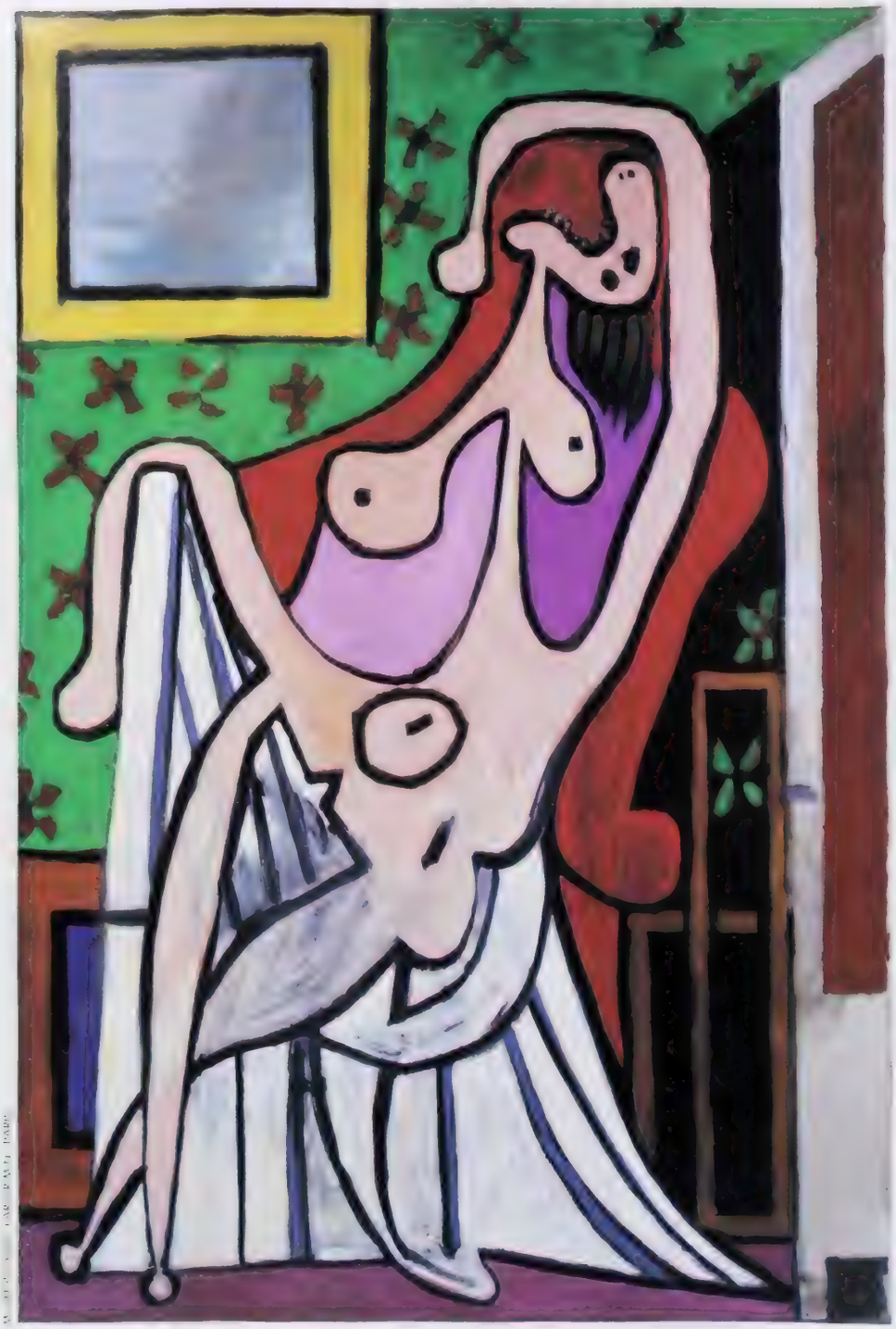
(1913), invaded, deconstructed, reduced, and disrespectfully reassembled though the subject is, seems to me to be one of the great nudes of this century, and one of the finest of Picasso's inventions. The lady is an assemblage of part-objects, and not all of them hers—her sex, or *cache-sexe* (there is both a pun and a violation of modesty at work here), is made up of buttoned fabric. Breasts, hair, navel, and ribs are exposed to us as the significant female signifiers. The breasts themselves are pegged ambiguously with what might be a second pair of nipples, the woman's lower parts conveyed by both the wrinkled fabric and the hair-like fringe of the chair. She herself has partly disappeared into the curving form of the wing chair. Deceptively upright and inviting, the upholstered chair, together with its knobbed, jagged, and generally protuberant occupant, suggests some kind of erotic booby trap.

In 1918, Picasso married the dancer Olga Koklova and began to enjoy the virtuous and orderly life of a bourgeois family man. A time of domestic contentment coincided with a neoclassical period in his art, a period of affirmation and return to the grand traditions of Western painting, in Ingres-like portraits, fine-lined scenes of classical life—idyllic gatherings and abductions—and a series of grand nudes, virginal and somewhat pastoral in conception, with gentle, Italianate eyes (Picasso had been "overwhelmed" by the *stanze* of Raphael in the Vatican during a trip to Rome in 1917) and large, soft, amiably conceived bodies—see, for example, *Large Bather* (1921–22) and *Nude Seated on a Rock* (1921). These figures—*madonne*, images of virtuous fertility, goddesses—are both acts of reparation and declarations of faith in female goodness.

These figures proved as short-lived as his marital contentment. By the midtwenties, the anxieties of Picasso's erotic life had returned. *The Dance* (1925) suggests a crucifixion as much as a farandole. It is a far cry from the loving (and somewhat saccharine) depictions of ballerinas done some six years previously, when Picasso was in his first enchantment with Olga and the Ballets Russes. We are back in the world of the *Demoiselles*, of alarming sirens in the guise of seduction. Once again, the image of female exuberance provokes Picasso's hostile and dismembering art. And, as previously, a period of whole and larger-than-life nudes leads to one in which the integrity of the icon is belligerently challenged.

Surrealism, with its erotic obsessions and love of puns, its streak of sadism, encouraged the hostile turn that Picasso's portrayal of women took in the twenties. In *Large Nude in a Red Armchair* (1929), the booby trap is in full operation. The female signifiers have changed since the 1913 version. This seated nude is all teeth and tentacles, a vision at once of sprawling immodesty, hysteria, and entrapment, and endowed with a sex that is simultaneously a sharp instrument and a gaping wound.

It gets worse, and more emphatic. *Seated Bather* (1930) has the poise of an Ingres odalisque—and the head and mandibles of a praying mantis. *Woman with a Stiletto* (*Death of Marat*; 1931) is a child's fantasy of being overpowered and consumed, as a huge amorphous female with breasts and teeth, jaws apart in primal scream, takes the life of the tinier, flattened male, who is depicted in the act of creation. Blood gushes from his wound to his manuscript, and he himself seems about to be eaten by the monster that



***Large Nude in a Red Armchair* (1929). The booby trap in full operation.**

looms above him. The paintings of this period—images that have been ascribed to tensions in Picasso's marriage with Olga—are rife with such sexual paranoia.

In 1927 Picasso had met and begun an affair with Marie-Thérèse Walter, a pretty, blond student of seventeen. Her face appears in several works during the following years, most notably in a series of sculptured heads produced between 1931 and 1933, in which [illegible] but distinctive profile [illegible] male genitals. Her figure [illegible] in paintings of the [illegible] Bonnin and creatively [illegible] Picasso ever made. The nudes inspired by Picasso's young mistress are placid, whole and wholesome. The discrete forms enclosed in sleep in *The Dream*, *The Dream (Reading)*, *Sleeping Nude*, *Nude on a Black Couch*, *The Mirror*, all of 1932, and *Nude Asleep in a Landscape* (1934) are each conceived as safe, silent, and, above all, still. These are images of a harmless and innocent creature, desirable and, significantly, unconscious. Picasso depicts his child-mistress as a ripe fruit, an oval cleft like a peach, or as a plump arabesque—all contained forms that speak of a kind of natural perfection, of something desired but not activated or acted upon. The nude's discreteness is a part of her beauty. Enclosed, but yielding, she may be awakened at the artist's bidding. And there is not a sharp edge or tentacle on her.

Between 1930 and 1937 Picasso made a series of etchings that were collected and published as the *Vollard Suite*. Here, poetry, mythology, and narrative are once more given full expression in his art. There are beautiful nudes, asleep and awake, handsome artists and Greek gods, Minotaurs, horses, ladies in distress, abductions and heroes, models and sculptures in artists' studios. Throughout, Picasso in his various guises is the hero, but the women are his peers and sources of inspiration. The book is about love, love fulfilled and re-created in art. It has a lyrical quality unlike anything in his work since his first associations with the Ballets Russes, when neoclassical imagery and a theater of magic and delight absorbed him. In this fantastical world, part autobiography, part universal daydream, Picasso abandoned the realities of his domestic entanglements and escaped to purer air.

By the second half of the 1930s, and particularly around the time of *Guernica* (1937), Picasso's painted women are no longer either still or unconscious. Images of weeping women, their features cracked or swollen by tears, dominate his art. In 1935, Picasso, by then the father of Marie-Thérèse's daughter, Maïa, separated from Olga. A year later he began his affair with Dora Maar, a photographer friend of the Surrealist crowd. Though the grieving women in his work may have been inspired by real reactions to his domestic upheavals, they seem to have a more universal aspect. By 1937, Picasso was using the figures of such women as expressions of outraged and violated humanity—as such they appear, howling, at far left and right in *Guernica* and in various parts of *The Dream and Lie of Franco, II*, also of 1937. By June 1940, when war was closer to home, the figure of woman was used in *Woman Dressing Her Hair* as an image of humanity reduced, by anxiety and deprivation. She is no longer a sexual presence, although she has been endowed with breasts, belly, and painted lips and bears some resemblance (in the breasts and right-side ribs) to her highly sexual predecessor, the subject in *Woman in an Armchair* of 1913. But this woman, cross-eyed with worry, splay-footed, and deathly pale, is as erotic as hanging poultry.

Not until long after the war did Picasso endow his nudes with their traditional

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK; PARTIAL GIFT OF ANONYMOUS DONOR AND PROMISED GIFT OF RONALD S. LAUDER

***Bather with a Beach Ball* (1932). Soft and amiable.**

female charms, and he turned to tradition to do so. In the great series of *Women of Algiers, after Delacroix* (1954) and *Luncheon on the Grass, after Manet* (1960–61, and taken up again in 1970), Picasso reaffirms the stature of the female nude and quite consciously asserts his own place in a hundred-year-old artistic line. No longer challenged by the icon, or the actual female presence behind it, Picasso in such paintings seems to be reaching over her head to his fellow artists in the grand tradition, "taking on" *them* rather than "nature" in the contest of his old age.

The quantity and the intensity in Picasso's late work have often been attributed to the artist's notorious fear of death. If that is correct, the image he contacted again and again as a source of energy and safety from mortal threat was emphatically female and sexual. The erotic content in the work of Picasso's last two decades is unlike anything else in his art, in its insistence, urgency, and power. All reference to himself and his art is made in terms of the female, who seems to be endowed with the properties of creativity and immortality. In drawing after drawing in the midfifties and the late sixties, Picasso depicts himself as artist (in the guise of clown, of winged and masked cupid, as grotesque dwarf or old man, even as ape) always admiring or wooing the lady. He repeats the image of the nude, both as an art-historical abstraction and, less grandly, and equally abstractly, as a sexual presence, evoked in signs, scrawls, and diagrams that often take on the appearance of bathroom graffiti. These latter images of women are not made as intellectual or visual jokes. Instead they are almost primitively urgent evocations of sexual power—an attempt to contact as much as to describe it—rendered by gestures or marks that reduce the female form to a system of erotic signs. In hundreds of drawings, woman is a primitive deity, crudely evoked and simply worshiped. Her sex, repeatedly set down by brutal markings, is seen as the essence of a sacred force, as though this place were the central site of power in the universe.

Picasso's last painted nudes lack that intensity. They are comic, treated with affection and detachment, but they are still erotic icons. Sex remained the central and most essential act in Picasso's last vision of human life and art. "Art is never chaste," he once said, " . . . and if it's chaste it isn't art." Just as human life has its origin in sex, the life of the image is born of the contact between the painter and his subject. In Picasso's last works, the painter is no longer onstage. Woman, not the artist, was the subject now, acting as a sign of life itself, that thing outside the painter that was not him or created by him, and which he would not let go of. □

Janet Hobhouse is a novelist and art critic. This article is adapted from The Bride Stripped Bare: The Artist and the Female Nude in the Twentieth Century, *published this month by Weidenfeld & Nicolson.*

MUSÉE PICASSO, PARIS/R.M.N., PARIS

***Reclining Nude* (1967). No longer challenged by the female presence.**

CABOT'S EDEN

He began with alpines. Where will it all end?

BY ELEANOR DWIGHT

At the lagoon, where ducks gobbled up water lilies, *Petasites japonicus giganteus* and *Acorus calamus variegatus*.

"Changing things is what a garden is all about," says Francis Cabot, an enthusiastic plantsman and designer whose garden, called Stonecrop, at Cold Spring, New York, was inaugurated thirty years ago with perfectly ordinary flower beds next to the house. It now covers eight acres, a wonderful sprawl of varying landscapes, some Japanese in spirit, some English, all original. They are filled with plants collected in Russia, Nepal, Japan, the Alps, England. "You've got to change your garden as you learn more and more. You realize the mistakes you've made and you try to make it better and better." Among the changes this year are a great rock ledge covered with exquisite alpine plants overhanging a newly made lake and an enclosed garden refashioned along contemporary English lines.

In 1958 there was nothing here but a hayfield, with the blue-blue [illegible] of the Hudson Highlands beyond. The hayfield remains, and the view, but all else is changed. From the terrace beside the house, nearby flower beds full of summer color are visible; an opening in a cedar fence leads into the lattice, or English, garden, with diagonal paths crisscrossing between beds, now overflowing with flowers, fruits, shrubs, and vegetables. Morning glories, honeysuckles, climbing hydrangea, many clematises, and tropical climbers cascade from the walls, weave through the trees, and curl up the tall trellises placed in the beds. Beyond lie greenhouses and an alpine house filled with rare exotics in raised beds. A path leads to a grass garden and a stream garden, whose theme is water. Here is the new lake, with a wisteria pavilion and a metasequoia grove on its far shore. Elsewhere are a woodland and a lagoon. Emerald grass grows among rhododendrons and azaleas under the shade of oaks.

Frank Cabot, a lively, courteous man in his sixties, grew up in a family that spent its summers in La Malbaie, on the north shore of

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICK HALES

the Saint Lawrence River, in French Canada. Here his parents created a formal garden with a narrow *tapis vert* flanked by double hedges of hawthorn and barberry, roses, a sunken blue garden, and a raised white garden. It was not until after his marriage, however, when the hayfield was given to his wife, Anne, that the thought of making a garden occurred. With a view to having a business-deductible excuse for keeping the place, he thought, "Why not have a rock-garden nursery?" At this point alpines began to take over Cabot's life. "You either respond favorably to the jewels of the world's mountainous crown or you don't," he says. For him it has been a deep love affair.

Contrasts: zinnia and felted gray-green plants.

These dwarf mountain species first fascinated English gardeners in the late eighteenth century, when horticulturists found them growing above the tree line in the Alps and brought them back. Growing them, however, was not so simple. Unless the habitats the plants thrived in—moraines, screes, mountain meadows—could be reproduced, they bloomed once and died. Today the immense catalog of alpine and rock-garden plants ranges, as the garden writer Hugh Johnson says, "from every man's alpines to those one might call 'highbrow,' part of whose appeal is they are very difficult to grow. . . . The challenge is that if you can find the formulas the results are sensational." Stonecrop, at an elevation of 1,100 feet, offered a good site.

Cabot joined the American Rock Garden Society, "where the action is," meeting and studying in the company of knowledgeable enthusiasts. "It's an extraordinarily interesting world," he says; "you just get hooked." In the midseventies he began taking mountain trips to study alpine plants in their own habitats—the Alps, the Caucasus, Nepal, Japan; the Rockies, Cascades, and Olympics. "One year we went up Mount Kenya to 16,300 feet and collected plants like mad. We gave them to the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew. At the time, these specimens represented something new to their collection."

Seeing these plants growing in the mountains "is breathtakingly beautiful, thrilling. If you're *interested,* there's nothing more exciting in the world!" A trip to the Maritime and Graian Alps, led by Paul Ingwersen of the Alpine Garden Society in England, was especially memorable. "We were

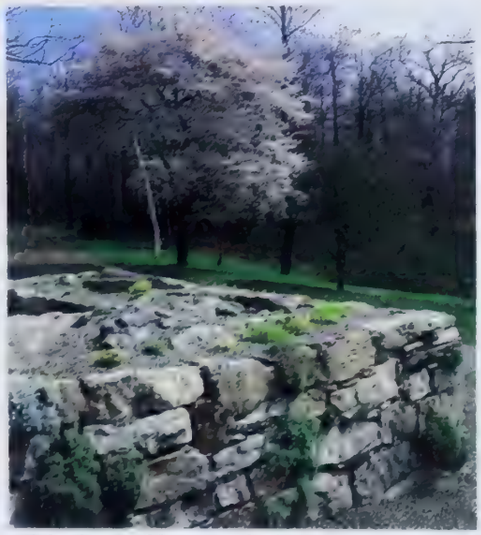
In September the lattice garden, now planted in the English manner, is at the peak of its form. The red corner is dominated by the dahlia "Fiery Red."

In winter the garden's skeleton is revealed. Here parallel cordons of little-leaved lindens, *Tilia cordata*, are woven together in the form of a cat's cradle.

there at the end of May and the beginning of June. There was nobody else. It was just a dream."

The English gardens he visited every year to build up his plant collection taught Cabot something about the skeletal structure of a good garden, especially since he often visited early in the spring before foliage could mask a garden's bones. "A proper garden has a whole series of elements. There should be perennial beds, a vegetable garden, a water garden, a woodland garden, a shade garden, a rock garden . . ." There was room for all this at Stonecrop, and he now had the know-how. "After years of working with plants we ended up being able to use them as part of a landscape, which we never could have done if we hadn't known the plants intimately and tried them in different places. And if we hadn't seen them in their native habitats and hadn't been exposed to the great gardens of the U.K." He adds, "We are fifty years behind England in making and appreciating gardens."

In the 1970s Cabot began to [illegible] more and more time in the garden. Now he can be found there almost every day in tall rubber boots and faded jeans with knee pads, clippers in hand and a Greek fisherman's cap on his head. Although he has a garden manager and a staff of four, he likes to plant the alpines and woodland plants himself and is an obsessive weeder. New projects get his full attention; he spent a lot of time working out alpine-plant combinations for the new rock ledge. "Just deciding what alpines to propagate next year is very time-consuming," he says. He has never used a landscape architect, though a landscape contractor named Cono Reale has made such brilliant contributions to the creation of the garden's new aspects—moving huge rocks and boulders, digging out places to be filled with water—that Cabot is happy to let him do what he sees fit. This "genius with rocks" has made Stonecrop's new lake.



While cherries bloom, so do drabas in a raised bed.

"The very costly and cumbersome business of trying to create water features" was set in motion after a trip to Japan. It began with the making of a stream garden—with artificial streams and pools—and what was first called a duck pond and later a lagoon.

Left to right: *Primula frondosa* in the woodland; *Draba bryoides imbricata*, an alpine, blooming in April; a Japanese alpine, *Aquilegia bertolonii*, in a stone bed.

The shell of a pond was bulldozed out of the ground, lined with clay, and given a circulating water system. "The lagoon has a Japanese feeling to it. I do believe that Japanese gardens should be 700 years old and near a temple. They are spiritual places. Nevertheless, the idea of a Japanese garden has always intrigued me. You're meant to stroll around the lake, encountering different vistas, different aspects."

Creating the lagoon was not all plain sailing. The bulldozer compacted the soil, and several trees died. "I bought some expensive water lilies and then thought we should have ducks. The ducks, however, liked the water lilies too and ate them." The Cabots finally had "a very expensive duck dinner." Then they tried fish, "but some overpropagated and stirred up the clay bottom so that the lagoon turned into the 'gray-green greasy Limpopo.' In due course the fish were eliminated and the remaining water lilies left in peace." Other parts of the Stonecrop garden are alive with noise and change, but the lagoon is motionless and serene. The water reflects the trees and sky; the palette is a range of greens—grass, conifers, green-and-white sweet flag. The rocks are placed cunningly.

Once the lagoon had been achieved, Cabot envisioned bigger and grander places to use water. In the lagoon it is a smooth sur-

ILLUSTRATED MAP BY PATRICIA McCOBB

Once nothing but a hayfield, Stonecrop is now a wonderfully complex arrangement of gardens, greenhouses, water courses, ponds, and trees.

face; at the great rock ledge it is a turbulent white cascade shooting down to the lake below. Cabot and Cono Reale began with an existing ledge of live rock. Moving in fill from construction under way on the nearby Route 301, they created a crater, at the base of the ledge, which when filled with water will make a spacious lake. Following Edith Wharton's preference for landscapes that offer "momentary escapes from the expected," he has made two approaches to the new lake, one through the stream garden, another through a garden of feathery grasses that wave in the wind and turn startling colors in the fall. The lake is crossed at one point by a series of enormous flat slabs of ledge rock nicknamed the "Flintstone Bridge." On one side of the lake stands a cruciform pavilion, with moon-shape openings, festooned with climbers: wisteria, the white autumn *Clematis paniculata,* the blue clematis "Mrs. Cholmondeley." "When the climbers bloom the whole pavilion will turn alternatively blue and white," says Cabot, who sees it as the heart of the garden, for it houses the water source. As the gardens grew and more water was needed, he drilled a second well where the pavilion now stands. The new lake completes a water link between the separate gardens, dynamically unifying the whole.

Walking down the rock ledge you approach the pavilion by stepping-stones and passing through it enter a grove of metasequoias, from which the lower pond is visible—both a focus for a water garden and a swimming hole on hot summer afternoons. On an adjacent hillside Cabot has planted a bamboo grove and primulas, which thrive on the moisture coming from a network of underground pipes. Then you step onto the Flintstone Bridge and look up at the rock ledge, carpeted with alpine plants.

"Here is a chance to use things on a big scale," Cabot says. "That whole crack there will be nothing but gentians; this whole terrace here will be nothing but pterocephalus, an alpine scabious. There will be three streams running over the ledge. When the water was running over it yesterday, my God, it was just out of this world." Rock gardens are generally a small part of a much larger garden; Cabot's is enormous, representing an ambitious use of a modest nineteenth-century idea made possible entirely by the modern technology that moves giant rocks.

Cabot used to grow flowers in the perennial beds near the house and in the lattice garden—peonies in spring, chrysanthemums in fall. His new garden manager, Caroline Burgess, has changed all that. Caroline was brought over from England and is one of the elite who have been intensively trained in horticulture. "She is a superb manager, extremely knowledgeable, and has a fine aesthetic sense," says Cabot. She has transformed the beds, mixing plants with seeming abandon: perennials, half-hardy perennials (more widely used in England than here), annuals (200 varieties), shrubs, vegetables, herbs. She plants them close together so that they will support one another. Using rare species when possible, she is building up a structure of perennials that will grow in size every year: roses, grasses, *Cotinus coggygria* (the smoke tree), monarda, iris, phlox, hibiscus, buddleia. She then fills in with annuals, half-hardy plants, whatever else she has "waiting in the wings. Then if you don't like that, you whip it out and whip in something else from your reserve in the greenhouse."

Caroline learned about gardens at Barnsley House, Rosemary Verey's garden in Gloucestershire (*Connoisseur,* January 1988). As a child she rode Mrs. Verey's horses and in return did some potting and weeding. "Rosemary tried to steer me towards a horticultural career. As her head gardener for four years, I was in

Mid-July: the trellises will soon be smothered in vines—morning glories, climbing French beans, Chilean glory flowers, and golden hops.

[illegible] vegetables, the flower garden, and propagation. After that I went to Kew." The horticultural diploma at Kew represents the completion of a rigorous program for fourteen students, who study all aspects of the subject for three years.

Inside its gray cedar fence the onetime lattice garden is becoming an English garden, with a series of beds planted by theme, starting with hot colors, red and orange, and moving down the spectrum to yellows and whites, lavenders and blues. The red bed includes grass with red tips, purple basil, rhubarb chard, Black Prince snapdragons, red dahlias, viola "Arkwright Ruby," salvia collected by the Cabots in Mexico, and beets.

From the shade of a pleached allée of linden trees (an idea taken from Sissinghurst), their tops woven in a cat's cradle, feathery asparagus can be seen growing beside giant nicotianas, corn dominating a bed of its own, goldenrod beside hollyhocks and variegated grass, a bed of gray and silver foliage plants, including *Helichrysum petiolatum* and artemisia "Powys Castle."

When Stonecrop is as near finished as a changing garden ever can be, Frank Cabot may make it a public garden, to be entrusted to the care of Caroline Burgess and perhaps a board of trustees, while he retires to the garden his parents made and he has continued to nurture at La Malbaie, in Canada—for keeping up two gardens at once can be an overwhelming task and responsibility. "We may even charge admission here," he dares to suggest. In any case, starting next year visitors will be able to buy specimens of virtually everything that grows at Stonecrop.

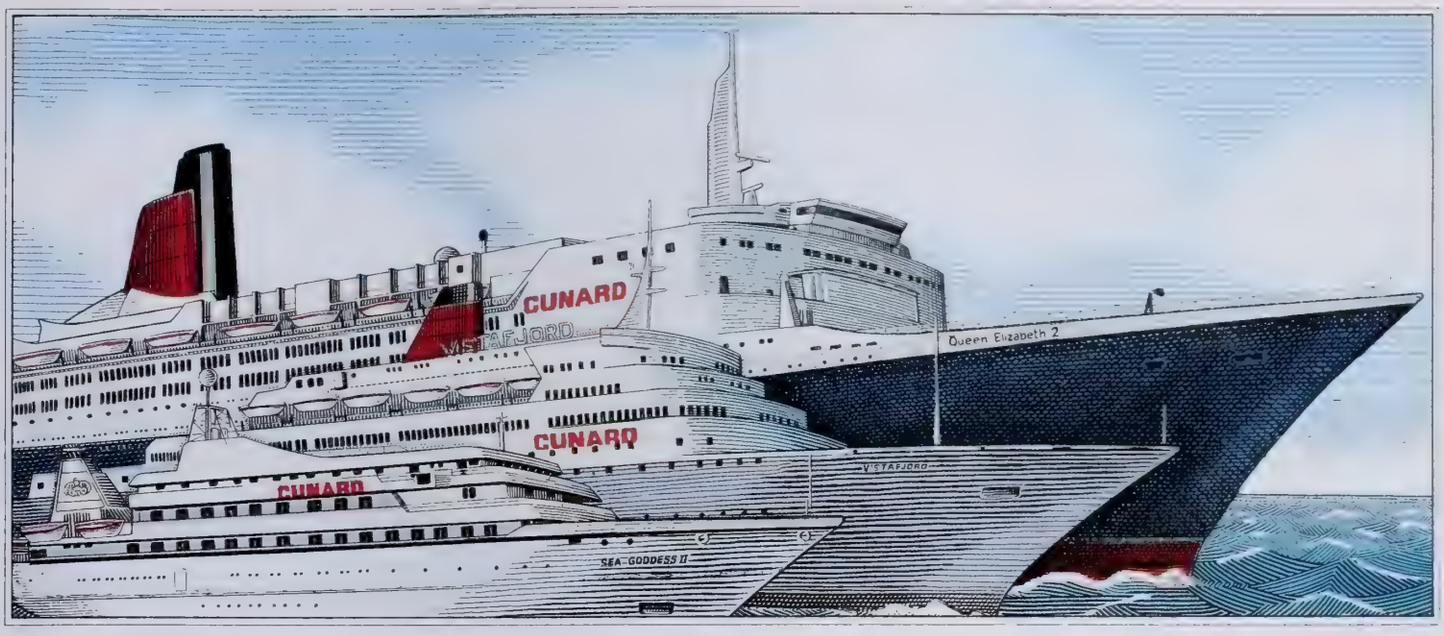
Is there any unity in this garden made up of so many disparate parts? It has no axis, although the flower beds near the house echo its shape, illustrating the Italian Renaissance notion that garden should relate to house and both to the landscape around. A recurrent theme here is the pointed French roof, or *pignon,* which tops the garden shed, pavilion, stables, office, and potting shed. Water more subtly unites many parts of the garden.

If not unity of form, the garden has a unity of spirit. William Robinson, writing of gardens a century ago, deplored parterres filled with sand and gravel or beds of flowers pinched into figured carpets—senseless attempts "to leave Nature out of the garden." At Stonecrop nature has been given many opportunities to display itself in rich variety—in pears and apples espaliered along the fence, a crowd of dark green hostas at the head of the stream garden, Anne Cabot's lovely knot garden, pink hollyhocks against the stuccoed shed, tiny, bell-like campanulas peeping from a wall, red astilbe lighting up the woodland shade, *Gunnera manicata* spreading its four-foot leaves near the lagoon.

It is Frank Cabot's vitality, his curiosity, his willingness to try new things that make Stonecrop so unusual and unconventional a creation. It has, says one Cabot cousin, "a kind of numinous quality. It's possessed of a spirit." □

Eleanor Dwight teaches literature and is an amateur gardener.

A path of wooden planking [illegible] Katsura tree, *Cercidiphyllum japonicum*, leads through the dense perennial borders to the flower garden.



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DEGAS: MYSTERY MAN, HOT PROPERTY

BY ROBIN DUTHY

COURTESY CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK

***Danseuse Attachant Son Chausson,* pastel and chalk on paper; $1,045,000 in 1985.**

The fact that Edgar Degas was a recluse and a misanthrope for much of his life lent him an air of mystery that certainly contributed to his image. Degas was no bohemian, however. The son of a wealthy banking family, born in 1834, he was in many ways conventional, a man of his class and as an artist a classicist, though a profoundly individual and bold one. The real Degas mystery lies in his art itself, with its "mysterious and fugitive beauty," as one biographer, Ian Dunlop, has written, "which is apt to disappear under the scholarly microscope."

Today, at around $240,000, the average work by Degas has soared in value far beyond that of most modern masters, including Picasso and Matisse. There are good reasons for this. His ballet and horse-racing scenes are superficially decorative, and yet they are deeply intellectual paintings, the work of a fine, analytic mind developed over a lifetime's study of the old masters. "I would like to be illustrious and unknown," Degas once remarked, and in a sense he achieved this wish. The depths of his complex art, so easy on the surface, are difficult to penetrate. No modern painter was more deeply rooted in the classics. In 1855, Ingres told him, "Make copies, young man, many copies. You can become a good artist only by copying the masters." In his sixties Degas was still copying the old masters in the Louvre.

Though he had little in common with the Impressionists, he exhibited with them seven times between 1874 and 1886. By 1884, American collectors such as Mrs. Potter Palmer already owned his work. At a Christie's sale in 1889 his small paintings of dancers sold for $300 to $350. In the same sale a more ambitious painting, *Au Café* [illegible] d'Orsay, was bought for the equivalent of $1,000. When this portrayal of a dissolute couple was later exhibited in London, as *L'Absinthe,* the press loudly condemned its subject as "repulsive." Degas's contempt for such hypocrisy won him a reputation for having a caustic wit.

COURTESY CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK

Left: *Femme à Sa Toilette,* sold last May for $1,210,000. For Degas, the usual bag of oats.

If he was fetching good prices over a century ago, he has done even better lately. Since 1975, prices for Degas's work have risen by 350 percent, with nearly half of that rise coming between 1986 and 1987. Even so, this performance puts him toward the low end of the French Impressionist–league table. The recent jump shows that dealers have been anticipating the surge of interest that should follow the huge Degas exhibition, seen earlier in Paris and Ottawa, now at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The market may get a fillip too from the scholarly exhibition catalog and from the publication of an important biographical and critical study by Robert Gordon and Andrew Forge (Abrams).

Few innovative artists have achieved in their lifetime the success Degas enjoyed. His importance was recognized long before his death, in 1917. At the auction of his friend Henri Rouart's collection, in 1912, astonishing prices were paid for his works, notably nearly $100,000 for *Danseuses à la Barre.* When Degas, now nearly blind, was asked how he felt about a painting that he had sold for 5,000 francs going for 478,000, he replied that his impressions were those of a horse who, having won the Grand Prix, receives his usual bag of oats.

From then, however, until after the Second World War the advance in prices was slow. In 1960, the first of the art-market analysts, Gerald Reitlinger, reckoned that much of Degas's work, other than the light pastels, was beginning to wear a somber, midnineteenth-century look. "It is easy to sell a painter whose works are so much alike that they can be recognised from

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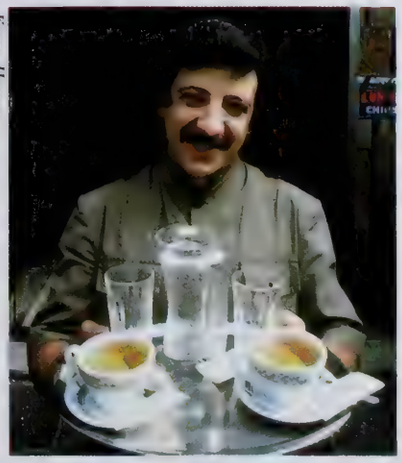

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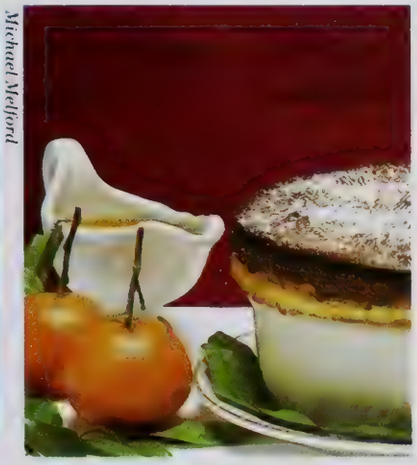

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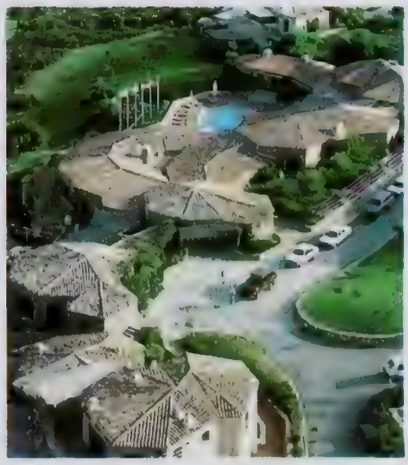

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across the road," he wrote, "but there is always some sort of limit to this market." How wrong he was. The top price for a Degas in 1960 stood at $180,000; it reached $13,688,400 in 1987, a rise of 7,500 percent in twenty-seven years.

Furthermore, the *Petite Danseuse de Quatorze Ans*—the only sculpture Degas ever exhibited—holds the record, at $10.1 million, for any piece of sculpture sold at auction, even though it is one of twenty-seven known casts. The little bronze girl, about three feet high, is dressed in a gauze tutu and has a satin ribbon tying back her hair. The wax original wore a real bodice, real slippers, and a horsehair wig, covered with a thin layer of wax before the figure was cast in bronze. The sculpture shocked Degas's contemporaries, and it still exudes a certain pagan creepiness, yet it is an astonishingly powerful image. The novelist J.-K. Huysmans wrote of the wax original (now owned by Paul Mellon), "At once refined and barbaric with her busy costume and her colored flesh, palpitating, lined with the work of its muscles, this statuette is the only truly modern attempt I know in sculpture."

GIRAUDON/ART RESOURCE (2)

Self-portrait. As a portrait painter, Degas belongs in the company of Holbein, Bronzino, and Van Dyck.

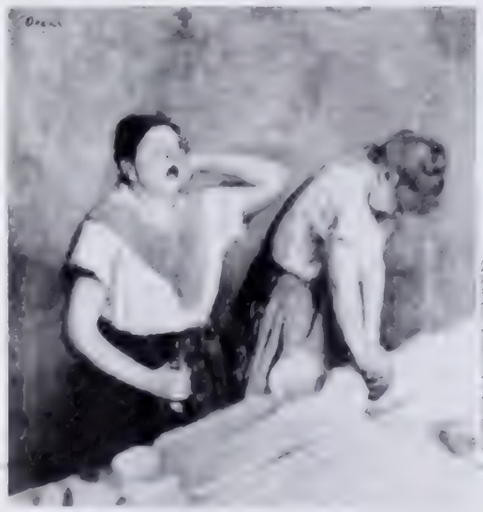
About 20 percent of Degas's output was portraiture of one kind or another. When he was only twenty-four and doing marvelously able portraits in the manner of Raphael, his father predicted that this kind of painting would be "the most beautiful jewel in [his] crown." To eyes unused to [illegible] art, portraiture was the safe [illegible] to pass judgment. The [illegible] drawing could most easily [illegible] works, and Degas's astonishing technical prowess was at its most obvious in this genre.

During a visit in 1872–73 to his brothers, who had a wine-importing business in New Orleans (a visit that inspired some fine paintings), Degas remarked in a telling letter to Rouart that "the women are almost all pretty and many have even amidst their charms that touch of ugliness without which there is no salvation." That essential duality gave his depiction of women the force of reality.

Degas was another of those churlish, egocentric artists, not unlike van Gogh and Cézanne, given to making abrupt and wounding remarks, who found relationships difficult, especially with women. He deliberately nurtured the image of "that terrible Monsieur Degas" and was annoyed when a young woman friend let it be known that he was not so bad after all. "If you take that away, what will be left?" he protested. It has been said that such behavior was a result of his need for privacy and solitude. Since he was as committed to his art as a painter could possibly be, the explanation is not entirely fanciful.

In a long and revealing letter to an old friend, the unsuccessful painter Evariste de Valernes, he confessed that if he had been "hard" with him he had been harder with himself. "You must be fully aware of this, seeing that you were constrained to reproach me with it and to be surprised that I had so little confidence in myself. I was or I seemed to be hard with everyone through a sort of passionate need to be brutal, which came from my uncertainty and my bad humor. I felt myself so badly made, so badly equipped, so weak, whereas it seemed to me that my calculations on art were so right." He went on to ask Valernes's pardon—"if under the pretext of this damned art, I have wounded your very intelligent and fine mind, perhaps even your heart."

Degas wrote to his friend the painter Tissot, in London, "I have never done with the finishing off of my pictures and pastels. How long it is and how my last good years are passing in mediocrity." He was referring to the onset of blindness, which left him unable to paint after 1912. Degas's humility is in astonishing contrast to the view of another artist friend, the cocksure American James Abbott McNeill Whistler, who declared, "As to art in Paris, there is only Whistler and Degas."



Les Blanchisseuses (Les Repasseuses), ca. 1884, oil on canvas. Sold in London in 1987 for $13,688,400.

Chevaux de Courses devant les Tribunes, 1869–70. Horses and ballet dancers had a similar appeal.

So rarely was Degas satisfied that it was hard to stop him from taking back works he had already sold, "to be retouched." The baritone Jean-Baptiste Faure, who collected the works of Manet and Degas, waited eleven years to get back paintings Degas was "altering." He finally took legal action to recover them. Degas once said he wished he were rich enough to buy back all his paintings and put his boot through them. The worst of it was that his second thoughts often fatally compromised the original work.

When his old friend Henri Rouart once bought a pastel, Degas, annoyed, said, "I forbade you to buy anything of mine!" and took it back "to look at it again in peace." A little later Degas returned with another picture: "Here, I spoiled your pastel. Take this in its place." It was *Danseuses à la Barre*, a painting that Rouart thenceforth kept under lock and key. It was the very painting that on Rouart's death was bought in 1912 for about $100,000 by Mrs. Havemeyer and presented to the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

The dynamism of Degas's treatment of women as a subject in painting results from an oscillation between his mixed feelings. His lifework may be seen as an

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,

PHOTOGRAPHED BY EDGAR DE EVIA

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When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.
W. Wordsworth

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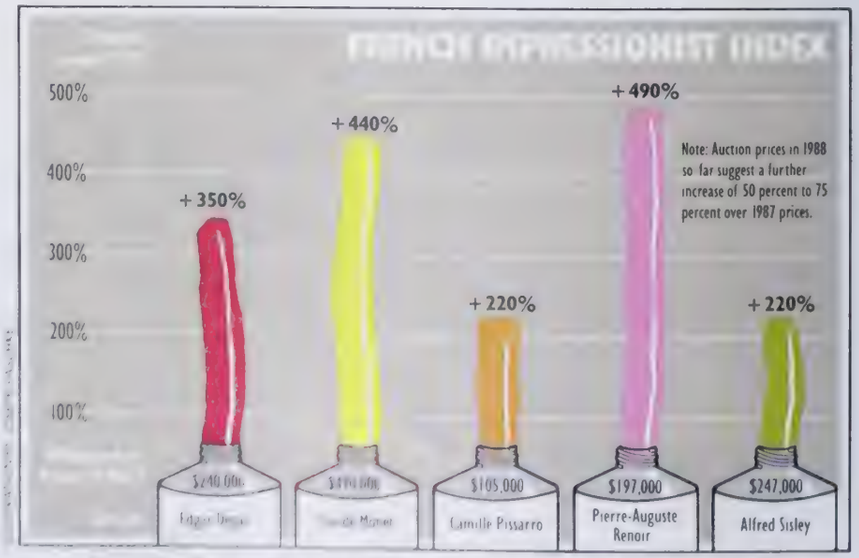
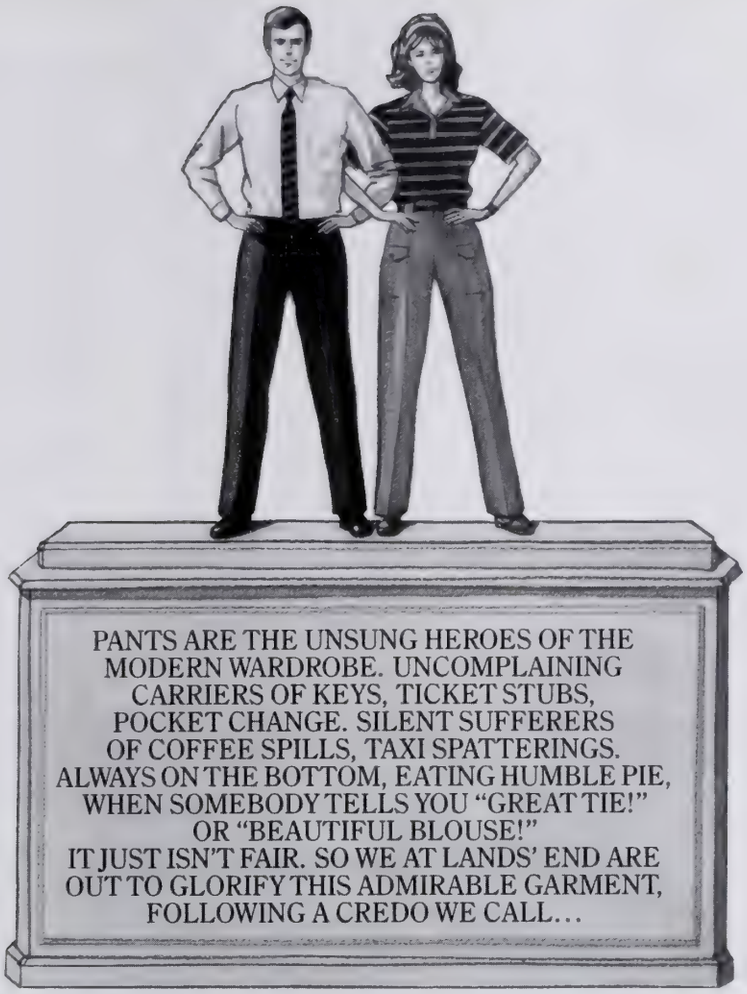


Comparing Degas with a few of his peers: how prices have risen since 1975.



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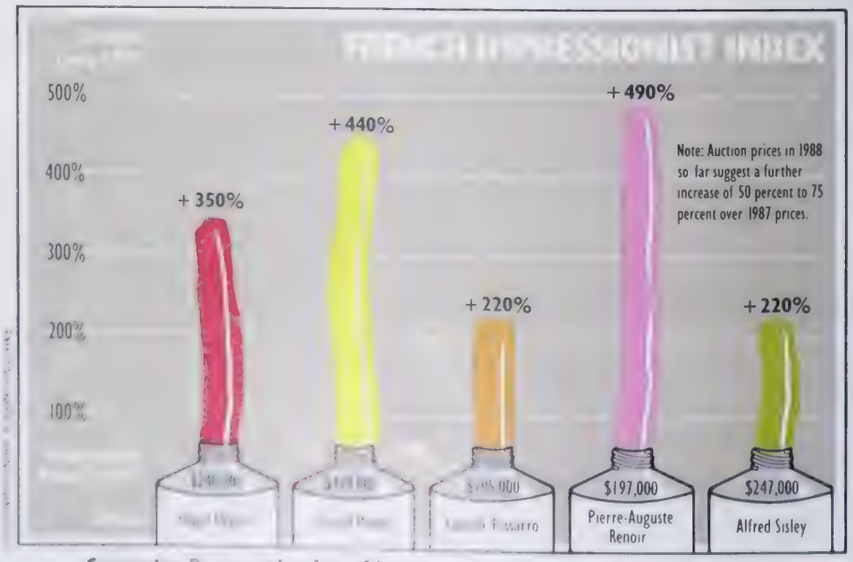

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1984: *Au Musée du Louvre—Miss Cassatt,* pastel on paper; $2,530,000.
1987: *Les Blanchisseuses,* oil on canvas; $13,688,400.

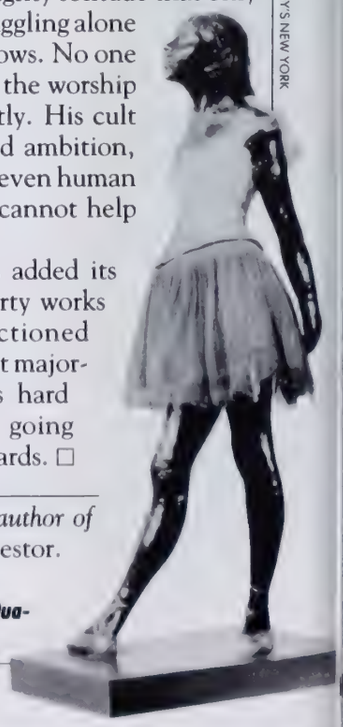
indeed he ever had an affair with a woman, nothing is known of it. Some sentimental poems of his youth hint at such a possibility. Perhaps the effect of a rejection on a sensitive young man would help to explain the later carapace of misanthropy.

Twenty or so sonnets Degas wrote overlap the subject of his paintings. While he was certainly a better painter than poet, his poems confirm what one has guessed about the tenderness of his feelings for the wretched little ballet "rats" he portrayed. One of them concludes asking the nymphs and graçes to give his little dancer—"winged urchin"—a light foot and to see that—"for my pleasure"—she should remember, even in the palaces she may one day enter, the streets she came from.

The critic Camille Mauclair wrote nearly fifty years ago, "We have not yet reached the time for a complete evaluation of Degas. All we know is that his singular and patient genius was sustained by the gifts of one of the most marvelous draftsmen ever known, that he was dominated always by a search for truth, and that with all his audacity, he remained fundamentally a classicist. As to the man himself, we cannot love him. He did not ask to be loved. He was bitter, introspective, and lonely with that mighty solitude that only the great artist, struggling alone with his media, knows. No one devoted himself to the worship of art more fervently. His cult for it overshadowed ambition, honors, money, or even human relationships. We cannot help admiring him."

The market has added its tribute. Around forty works by Degas are auctioned every year, the great majority in pastel. It is hard to imagine prices going anywhere but upwards. □

Robin Duthy is the author of The Successful Investor.



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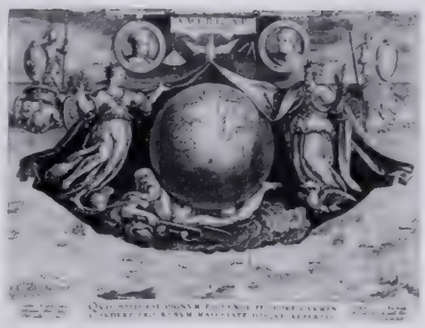

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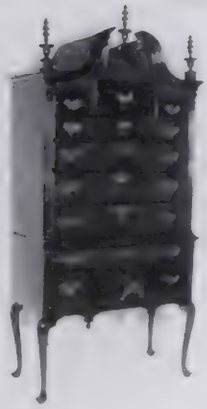

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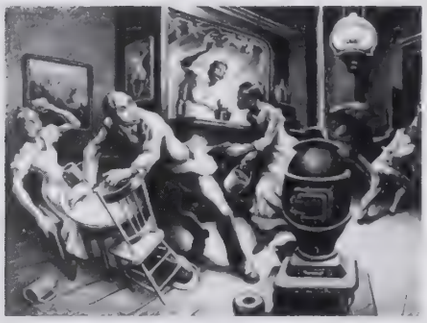

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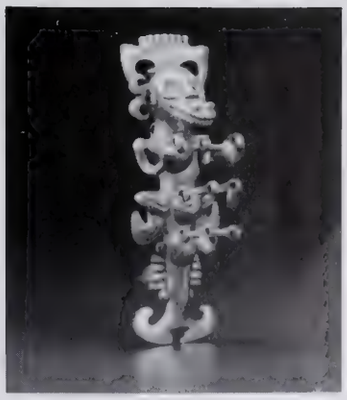

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THE GETTY'S STATUE: BEYOND LEGALITY

Imagine that you are a high official at a museum that is long on funds but short on masterpieces. Imagine further that your last major acquisition, an imposing and unusual work, has been widely disputed; it seems, embarrassingly enough, to be a fake. To regain lost status, you would be on the lookout for a great piece, one that no one could disparage, and damn the cost! And if the work were bigger than life-size, well, that would be a definite plus—all the better to make a strong impression.

Now, then, how far would you stretch the law to get it?

On December 15, 1987, a crate, sent from Britain and weighing a ton, arrived at the Los Angeles International Airport. To an outsider, the most interesting thing about the box was its declared value: $20 million. After easily clearing customs, the crate was trucked to the addressee, the J. Paul Getty Museum, 17985 Pacific Coast Highway, Malibu, where it was unpacked and its contents placed in the care of the conservation department.

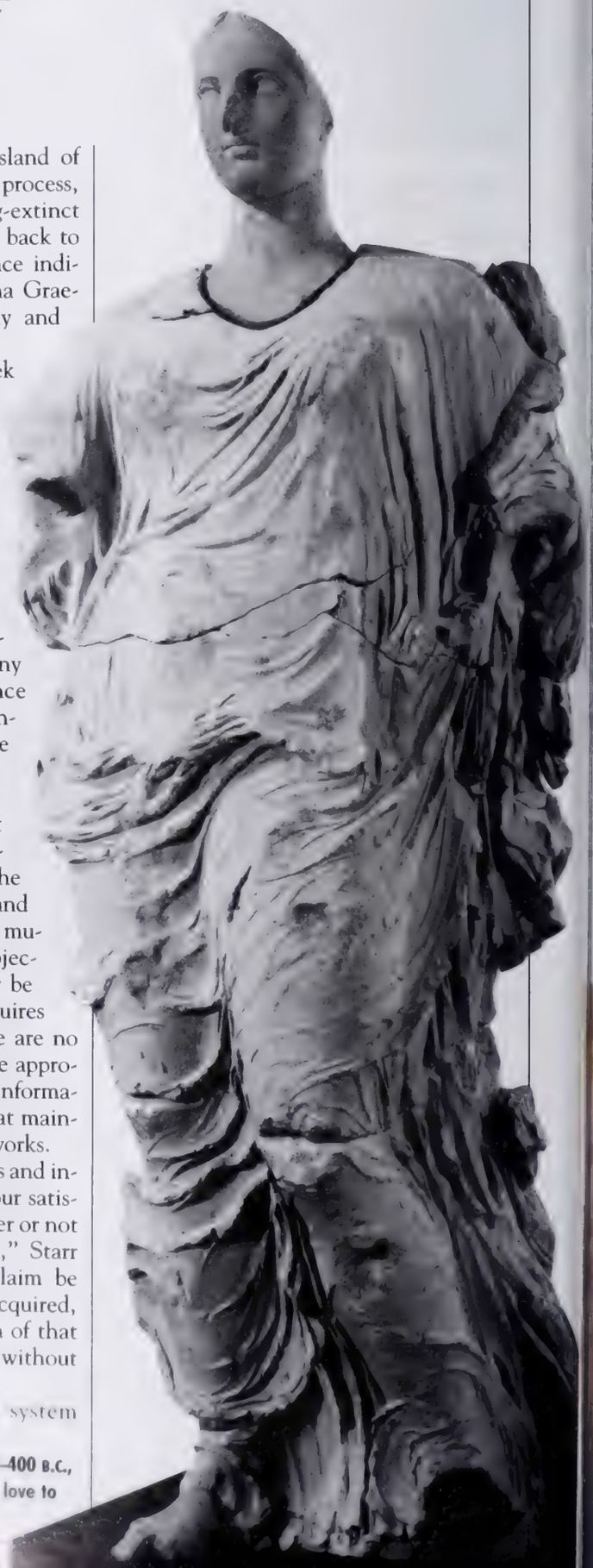
The shipment was revealed to an amazed world some seven months later, on July 28, 1988. It was of an ancient Greek cult sculpture, perhaps of Nike, Hera, or Aphrodite and also, undeniably, a great rarity. Standing ninety inches high, with a marble head, arm, hands, and foot and a limestone body, the statue was greeted with a chorus of praise. It "is remarkable for the power and monumentality of the huge heavy limbs, the lightness and delicacy of the windblown draperies and the majestic serenity of the head," wrote John Russell, the senior art critic for the *New York Times*.

The unveiling must have been a proud moment for the Getty, particularly for its director, John Walsh, and his curator of antiquities, Marion True. They had taken their share of criticism, after all, for the museum's acquisition of an archaic marble kouros that [illegible] million in 1984 and was [illegible] How gratifying to them that [illegible] was authentic! The [illegible] sure of that [illegible] marble (which came from the Greek island of Paros); they even found, in the process, traces within the head of a long-extinct species of snail. The piece dated back to around 420 B.C. Stylistic evidence indicated that it was made in Magna Graecia—what is now southern Italy and Sicily. Where had it been found?

As a major collector of Greek and Roman antiquities, the Getty was fully aware that any major piece coming on the market—especially one that had never been seen before, like the monumental cult figure—might be "hot"—stolen or smuggled. For that reason, says Lori Starr, the Getty's public-information chief, the museum follows a three-point procedure before making any major acquisition. In accordance with the UNESCO convention, international law, and the laws of the United States and other nations, the Getty (1) sends photographs and a description of the object under consideration to the appropriate government agencies in the most likely countries of origin and asks those agencies to advise the museum if there are any specific objections or possible claims that may be made against the object; (2) requires the vendor to warrant that there are no claims against the object and give appropriate indemnities; and (3) sends information on the object to agencies that maintain records of stolen or missing works.

"Only when such investigations and inquiries have been completed to our satisfaction, is a decision made whether or not to proceed with the acquisition," Starr insists. "Should a valid legal claim be made after an object has been acquired, our policy provides for the return of that object to the country of origin, without regard to statutes of limitation."

No matter how foolproof a system



The monumental cult figure, dated to 425–400 B.C., is so rare a piece that any museum would love to have it—if its provenance checked out.

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[illegible] it is only as good as its enforcement. And the test soon came when serious questions arose about the provenance of the statue. On June 22, well before the work was put on exhibition, the editor-in-chief of this magazine, Thomas Hoving, was tipped off by a source in the world of antiquities that the Getty had purchased or was about to buy an enormous marble and limestone sculpture of the fifth century B.C. According to the source, this statue had been excavated in Morgantina, in Sicily, and sold in Geneva some two years earlier by a top Sicilian antiques smuggler for $1.5 million to the London antiquities dealer Robin Symes. Another informant disclosed that a Getty staffer had been bragging that the museum had "put one over on the Italians."

Hearsay of that sort is, of course, hardly reliable. But when *Connoisseur*'s stringer in Los Angeles, Susan Pettit, on June 28 tried to confirm even the imminence of such a purchase, the Getty retreated behind its policy of not commenting on any pending acquisition. "They just raised the drawbridge," Pettit reported.

Working on the story in Italy, Patricia Corbett, *Connoisseur*'s European editor, looked into point 1 of the Getty's policy. The museum had contacted Francesco Sisinni, director general of the Italian ministry of culture, in June or July 1987. He followed up, Corbett was told, by sending a memorandum to all the superintendencies and the carabinieri, the paramilitary police, asking for data about the piece, including whether it was stolen. Sisinni and his second in command refused to discuss the matter.

Spot checks revealed that some superintendencies (those in Rome and Palermo) had received the memorandum, but some, notably in the south (Reggio di Calabria, Potenza, and Agrigento, the superintendency that administers Morgantina), had not. Since none of the official agencies that actually did receive the request knew anything about the statue, they did not register any objections.

To the Getty, no news was good news. The museum went ahead with plans for the sculpture's acquisition. It apparently did not occur to top officials there that the question they had asked throughout Italy—whether a piece was officially recorded as missing—[illegible] the issue of whether the [illegible] documented. Put another way, it [illegible] official record of the statue, as [illegible] Getty could [illegible] official record [illegible] The museum [illegible] not have wanted to confront the problems arising directly from the statue's complete lack of documentation.

But it soon had to. From Susan Pettit's questions, the Getty learned that *Connoisseur* was looking into the matter. Two days later, on June 30, Patricia Corbett got in touch with Robin Symes in London with the same questions. Perhaps scenting trouble in the offing, the museum on July 10 sent Malcolm Bell, an archaeologist from the University of Virginia who was working in Morgantina, to call on Graziella Fiorentini, the superintendent of antiquities of Agrigento, Caltanissetta, and Enna. He provided her with photographs of the cult figure and told her that the Getty had heard "press reports" linking the piece to Morgantina. Fiorentini started. Her mind raced back to the archaeological season of 1978–79, when she was herself a vice-superintendent directing the team digging at Morgantina, once an important Greek settlement but now just a dusty ruin in central Sicily. She had heard of clandestine excavations, including one of an exceptionally large marble or stone sculpture. Although she did not really believe the gossip—"Terra-cotta statues are more common in the area"—she duly reported rumors to the authorities. Could this be the piece the Getty, ten years later, was thinking of buying?

Fiorentini alerted Colonel Emidio Napolitano, chief of a special police unit in Rome for the recovery of stolen art, to her worries. According to Italian law, any improper removal of archaeological property from Italian soil is considered theft from the state. Accepting or purchasing such items is defined as receiving stolen goods. The doughty Italian superinten-

John Walsh, director of the Getty, enjoys a quiet moment in front of the museum, modeled on a Roman villa; the building will contain only the Getty's antiquities when a new museum is built.

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dent also telegraphed Marion True, requesting more information.

True cabled back that there had been a misunderstanding, that there were no published press reports of the statue's coming from Morgantina. The Getty merely wished to ascertain whether the Agrigento superintendency specifically had any information on the sculpture. An answer to the contrary would be in line with the ministry of culture's prior negative response.

But Fiorentini was unsatisfied. Once again, the Getty was asking the wrong questions. If the piece were legitimately on the market, it should have all its papers in order—but it did not. "How could I give her [True] the go-ahead she was asking for?" Fiorentini cabled True on July 21, informing the Getty that the local and national police were looking into the possibility that the figure had been clandestinely excavated and illegally exported.

ONLY THE MAFIA COULD HAVE SMUGGLED OUT SO BIG A WORK.

"I have no concrete evidence that the piece came from our site," Fiorentini conceded, "but I couldn't rule it out either. Above all, I did not want to say anything that could be remotely construed [by the Getty] as approval or consent." Even so, the museum announced its acquisition and put the statue on display. Later, museum officials were to explain that they exhibited the piece hastily "in order to be certain that if there were valid claims to be made, they would be made promptly."

They did not have to wait long. As word spread of the Getty's purchase, Interpol, the police liaison agency that monitors and coordinates art-theft information for 146 member countries, joined the Italian police in investigating the matter. Since the Getty's sculpture was known to have been shipped from the United Kingdom to the United States, Scotland Yard and the FBI were soon alerted, too. Interpol, despite point 3 of the Getty's stated policy on acquisitions, complained that it had never been contacted by the museum.

The Italian government entered the picture in early August, asking the Getty to disclose how it acquired the statue. "This is an extraordinary, singular work of art, and the whole world has a right to know where it came from," explained Vincenza Bono Parrino, the minister of cultural properties in Rome. Nonetheless, the

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[illegible] **Pages 136–37:** Mark Hampton: Victorian hearth chair, $1,[illegible] and [illegible] E. Antonio & Co., New York, [illegible]; Adele Hunt Furniture and [illegible] Dallas, TX 75205; and The [illegible] Fireplace Square Design Center, 2 Hen[illegible] Suite 299, San Francisco, CA 94103. **Juan Montoya:** Frame chair, $2,810, from Juan Montoya Design, 80 Eighth Avenue, 16th floor, New York, NY 10011. By appointment only. (212) 242-3622. **Jay Spectre:** Eclipse chair, $1,166–$2,171, from Bloomingdale's, New York; Colby's Home Furnishings, 3635 West Touhy Avenue, Lincolnwood, IL 60045; The Bon Marché, Seattle; and Macy's, San Francisco. **John Saladino:** Tulip chair, $1,985, from John Saladino Inc., 305 East 63rd Street, 14th floor, New York, NY 10021. **Pierre Deux:** Sofa, $4,405, from Bloomingdale's, New York; Colby's Home Furnishings, 3635 West Touhy Avenue, Lincolnwood, IL 60045; Suniland, 2800 Fondren, Houston, TX 77063; and J. H. Biggar Co., 680 East Colorado Blvd., Pasadena, CA 91101. **Page 138: Jay Spectre:** Chair, $1,166–$2,171; Eclipse side table, $995; and Delaunay table, $2,450. (For stores and showrooms, see above.) **Page 139: Mark Hampton:** Chair, $851–$1,391; bench, $484–$731; table, $1,439; and sofa, $2,351–$4,079. (For stores and showrooms, see above.) **Page 140: John Saladino:** Bench, $4,290; table, $1,735; and chair, $1,985. (For stores and showrooms, see above.) **Page 141: Pierre Deux:** Armoire, $7,010; bookcase, $7,010; desk, $1,550; and bed, $3,495. (For stores and showrooms, see above.) **Page 142: Mario Buatta:** From furniture showrooms nationwide. **Juan Montoya:** Chair, $1,325; and ottoman, $300, from Robert Allen, 979 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10022; Design Studio, 5200 West Dempster Street, Chicago, IL 60077; and Neville Nowell Design Ltd., 680 Eighth Street, Suite 155, San Francisco, CA 94103. Bed, $15,400. (For showroom, see listing above for pages 136–37.) **Page 143: Juan Montoya:** Frame chair, $2,810. (See listing above for pages 136–37.) **Angelo Donghia:** Grande Flute chairs, $4,084 each, from Donghia showrooms, D&D Building, 979 Third Avenue, 12th floor, New York, NY 10022; 600 Merchandise Mart, Chicago, IL 60654; and 8715 Melrose Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

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museum did not budge. Its policy on acquisitions forbids revealing the name of the vendor, the price of the work, or the recent history of the piece. Moreover, the museum stoutly maintained, "Allegations [that the piece may have been dug up in Morgantina] have not, to our knowledge, been substantiated by any evidence or established facts."

The missing data regarding the sculpture's provenance should by all rights come from the vendor. Who was that? One person who wanted to know was Graziella Fiorentini. In mid-July, at about the time Malcolm Bell contacted her, the Getty's representative in Rome, Mario Gallavotti, a lawyer with powerful connections, called to give her some assuaging information. The statue, he said, had been in the collection of a British antiques merchant for fifty years. *Connoisseur*'s reporter in London, Michael VerMeulen, followed up on that lead—only to find it led into a blind alley. "Fifty years?" snorted Brian Cook, keeper of Greek and Roman antiquities for the British Museum. "That takes us back to 1938—and that rules out everyone I know of. I cannot think of anyone active in London right now who was active before the war."

Patricia Corbett was next to ask Gallavotti about the statue's provenance. He changed the story slightly, saying the piece had been in an English collection since before World War II. Who had sold it to the Getty? Only a few dealers in the world could possibly handle such an expensive work of art. Looking in London, VerMeulen asked Michael Spink, associate director of Spink & Son, for advice. "I say, have you spoken with Robin Symes?" Spink replied. "He's the leading antiquities dealer in town right now."

Unfortunately, Robin Symes, a brilliant man, was on vacation out of the country and could not be reached for comment. Named by *Connoisseur*'s original informant as the vendor, he had been phoned by Patricia Corbett in late June but had been evasive on the subject of the statue, to put it mildly. Since then, several other art-world sources have named Symes as the vendor. As for the price he received for the piece, it is reported variously at $20 million and $7 million—either way, a tidy profit on a $1.5 million purchase.

At press time, the Getty seemed to have decided on its official stance: it would give the statue back to the country of origin when confronted with "a valid legal claim," a claim the top officers must know is most unlikely to be pressed. They can be certain their vendor, Robin Symes, will remain adamantly silent, as, indeed, the museum's contract with him probably demands. They should feel secure that the man who sold the statue to Symes—either the top Sicilian smuggler, one Orazio di Simone of Geneva, or the man who "works" Morgantina for him, one Nicolò Nicoletti—will never say a word.

The officials in Italy's ministry of cultural properties—whether because of disinterest, corruption, or incompetence—are

The Getty's statue may have been dug up in Morgantina, where there were reports of illegal excavations. Archaeologists suspect it was broken into three pieces to facilitate its being smuggled out of Sicily.

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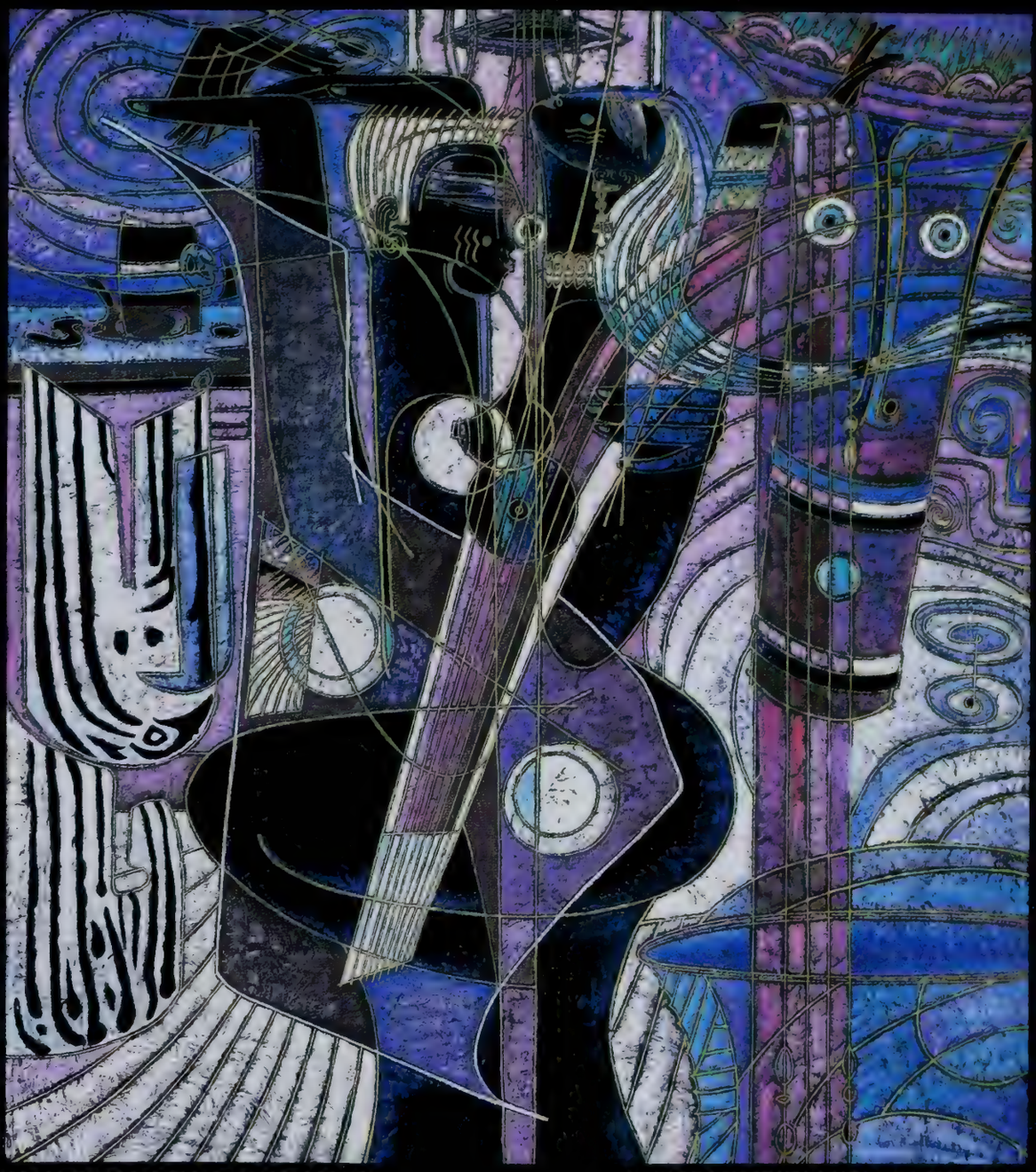

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reluctant to move to reclaim the work. A high-ranking member of the carabinieri told *Connoisseur* that "this will be only a summer fling for the press." Nor are the police or the prosecutors in Sicily eager to get involved with the only organization that could have easily and clandestinely moved a large statue—the Mafia.

The Getty's decision makers may well have taken all this into consideration. In strict legal terms, the issue of the provenance and title of the statue will fade away. The Getty will probably keep the cult figure forever, confident this large and authentic work will complement a classical collection that is, with the exception of a few lamentable forgeries, already the equal of any in the rest of the nation.

Yet there are trade-offs to be reckoned. As long as questions remain outstanding, the reputation of the Getty, a museum that has trumpeted its intention to use its vast resources well and honestly, will surely suffer. Does anyone really believe that the sculpture had been in an English collection since before the war? Does anyone really believe that this piece could have legally left Italy without any papers?

"I SAY, HAVE YOU TALKED TO ROBIN SYMES?"

The archaeological community is aghast. Brunilde Ridgway, a professor at Bryn Mawr College, called the Getty "irresponsible" in a published report. Joseph Carter, of the University of Texas, adds that "the Getty is making life very hard for American archaeologists. They are just like the nineteenth-century robber barons." Both refused to give an opinion on the statue because that would help authenticate a possibly smuggled piece.

In the short run, the most damaging result of the acquisition is that it will surely serve as a catalyst for the investigation of other questionable antiquities in the Getty collection. At press time, for instance, this magazine was informed about a group of fifth-century-B.C. "akrolithic" sculptures allegedly taken without proper papers from Morgantina and on loan to the Getty since 1984. They were quietly removed from exhibition and returned to the lender, reported to be Robin Symes. □

This article was written in New York from reports filed by Patricia Corbett in Italy, Paul Chutkow in Paris, Michael VerMeulen in London, and Susan Pettit in Los Angeles.

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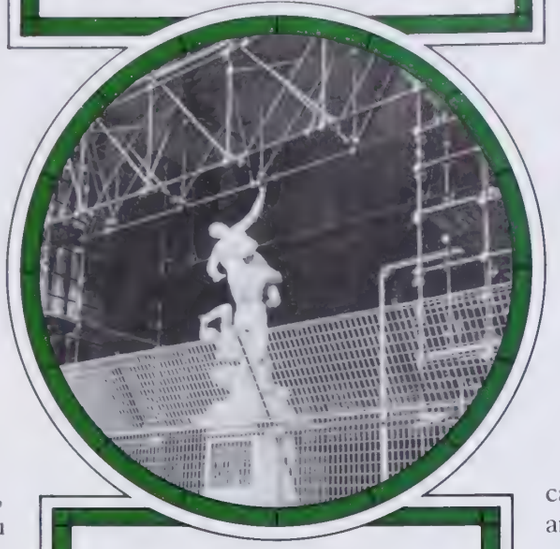

Italy under wraps

Everywhere you go in Italy these days, you think you are seeing a Christo you had not heard about. Monuments, buildings, and works of art that constitute Italy's cultural heritage are hidden behind scaffolding or wrapped in green wire mesh for a much needed restoration. Italy woke up late to the danger of losing its masterpieces, but since the early eighties it has been in high gear; every region has programs in place and, one hopes, funds to complete them, and each is being carried forward with great style. Scaffolding is not just scaffolding but, with its slender black tubing and elegant brass fittings, looks like a postmodern addition to the façade. Swaths of fabric are draped as if for a stage. Here is a brief guide to what is under wraps—or soon will be—and what has recently emerged from restoration.

MILAN: Perhaps the most famous painting being subjected to the laborious process of restoration is Leonardo da Vinci's *Last Supper,* which had cracked and faded. At the halfway point, the painting is again open to the public. Located in the onetime refectory of a Dominican convent in the Church of Santa Maria delle Grazie, it is curiously underwhelming, with a plain, straightforward appearance that seems as modest as its surroundings.

Much grander are the recently restored Colonne di San Lorenzo—a row of sixteen second-century Roman columns, in the Corso di Porta Ticinese. Like all of Milan's major monuments, it is majestically lighted at night.

The rear (east) façade of the Duomo, Milan's magical sand-castle cathedral, is wrapped, and the piazza in front of the Duomo is almost completely fenced off, with a large crane looming over it. Two steps away, the north and south wings of the Galleria Vittorio Emmanuele II, the famed nineteenth-century shopping arcade, are filled with scaffolding, though elegant ladies still lunch at Savini's (one of Milan's best restaurants) with their backs against the plywood partitions.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEPHEN ROBERT FRANKEL

Top: In Florence, the Piazza della Signoria is a mass of scaffolding. Above: In Milan, the Galleria Vittorio Emmanuele II continues to function under wraps.

In the Pinacoteca di Brera a room has been set aside to show off three important old-master paintings beautifully restored last year: Raphael's *Marriage of the Virgin,* Piero della Francesca's *Madonna and Child with Angels,* and Signorelli's double-sided canvas *Madonna and Child with Seraphim* and *Flagellation.*

FLORENCE: Florentines have been particularly restoration-conscious since the disastrous flood of November 4, 1966, which damaged thousands of artworks and churches near the Arno. The most visible restoration project these days is the Piazza della Signoria itself, more than half of which has been dug up and covered with scaffolding and molded plastic. Moreover, an archaeological dig is under way, because many artifacts of interest were unearthed during the restoration. None of this has deterred Florentines or tourists from enjoying the café Rivoire's outdoor tables despite the radical change in scenery. The Loggia dei Lanzi, at the end of the Uffizi's west wing, has been covered with scaffolding since the summer, hiding such masterpieces as Cellini's *Perseus.*

Meanwhile, restoration work continues on the bronze panels of Ghiberti's Baptistry door. For the last eight years, several of these panels have been replaced by plywood insets inscribed "FORMELLA IN RESTAURO." Fortunately, the two that have been restored can be seen at the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, nearby. Botticelli's paintings *The Birth of Venus, Primavera,* and *Annunciation* are back on view in the same room of the Uffizi, their luminous beauty and grace more apparent since their cleaning. The same can be said of the Fra Angelicos in San Marco, especially the recently restored frescoes in the forty-four monks' cells on the second floor.

South of the river, a nearly completed restoration of the rear façade of the Pitti Palace allows an unobstructed view once more of Ammannati's elaborately rusticated mannerist design. However, Masaccio's fresco cycle in the Brancacci Chapel has been completely hidden by wood and

(Continued on page 214)

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TRAVELINE

Left: The elegantly wrapped rear façade of Milan's Duomo.

(Continued from page 212)
plastic since 1984. On the sign describing the restoration, a frustrated visitor has written, "Shame! How much longer must we wait?" (Answer: Until late 1988–early 1989.)

ROME: After several years behind scaffolding, the Colosseum, the Pantheon, and fountains in the piazzas di Spagna and Navona are mercifully free of obstruction. You can also get a close-up view of the frieze on Trajan's Column by climbing the stairs incorporated into the scaffolding to see the 2,500 magnificently carved figures that wind their way around the 125-foot-high column.

For several years now, the twelve-year restoration of the Sistine Chapel has been a cause célèbre, with high-powered experts firing volleys of impassioned opinions at Vatican officials and one another. To this viewer's eye, the restored wall frescoes looked right, though the half of Michelangelo's ceiling fresco already cleaned looked almost garish—"cleaner than clean," as one critic put it; but there can be no final verdict until the restoration is completed, in 1992. Also being restored in the Vatican are the magnificent Raphael rooms; some are now open to the public.

VENICE: Among the more recent successful restorations are the Ca' d'Oro, Venice's most famous late-Gothic palace, with its ornate façade (even more spectacular since) and fine collection of Renaissance art; the Church of San Giorgio Maggiore, one of Palladio's most [illegible] masterpieces, located across the [illegible] from the Piazza San Marco; the [illegible] and the room [illegible]

"Shame! How much longer must we wait?"

staircase of the Palazzo Contarini del Bovolo. In 1985, Tintoretto's monumental *Paradise* went back on view in the Doges' Palace, where its cluster of brilliant figures fills an entire wall. This past spring, a favorite painting, Carpaccio's *Recovery of a Man Possessed by Demons,* returned to the Accademia after several years. The most important restorations still in progress are the façade of the basilica of St. Mark's, the façade and part of the courtyard of the Doges' Palace, and the Church of Santa Maria dei Miracoli.

AREZZO: Piero della Francesca's fresco cycle *The Legend of the True Cross,* in the Church of San Francesco, can be viewed until 1989, when a two-year restoration will begin. Now the church's façade and side chapels are under restoration.

[illegible] panels in Ghiberti's Baptistry doors replaced with plywood.

GENOA: The old quarter, including the Porto Vecchio, is soon to be restored. Already part of the port area is being modernized for the Columbus quincentennial, in 1992.

MANTUA: In the Ducal Palace, Mantegna's greatest fresco cycle, in the Camera degli Sposi, can be seen briefly as part of the guided tour. The Palazzo del Te, Giulio Romano's architectural masterpiece, is closed for restoration.

NAPLES: The bronze equestrian statues in the National Archaeological Museum, the cloister of Santa Chiara, and the triumphal arch of Alfonso d'Aragona are all being restored.

PADUA: In the Scrovegni Chapel, Giotto's frescoes have been superbly restored. So have the Mantegna frescoes in the Capella Ovetari of the Church of the Eremitani. Also, in the Basilica di San Antonio, see the restored frescoes by Titian.

PARMA: Restoration has turned the Galleria Nazionale into one of Italy's best and most architecturally interesting museums. The seventeenth-century Teatro Farnese, heavily damaged in World War II, now beautifully reconstructed, is spectacular, with an astonishing sculpted interior made almost entirely of wood. Do not miss the Duomo, with Correggio's dramatic ceiling fresco restored, or the Baptistry's fresco-covered interior.

PERUGIA: Happily, the Palazzo dei Priori (which includes the National Gallery of Umbria) is open despite work on the façade; the Duomo looks fine restored. □

By Stephen Frankel, a free-lance writer living in New York.

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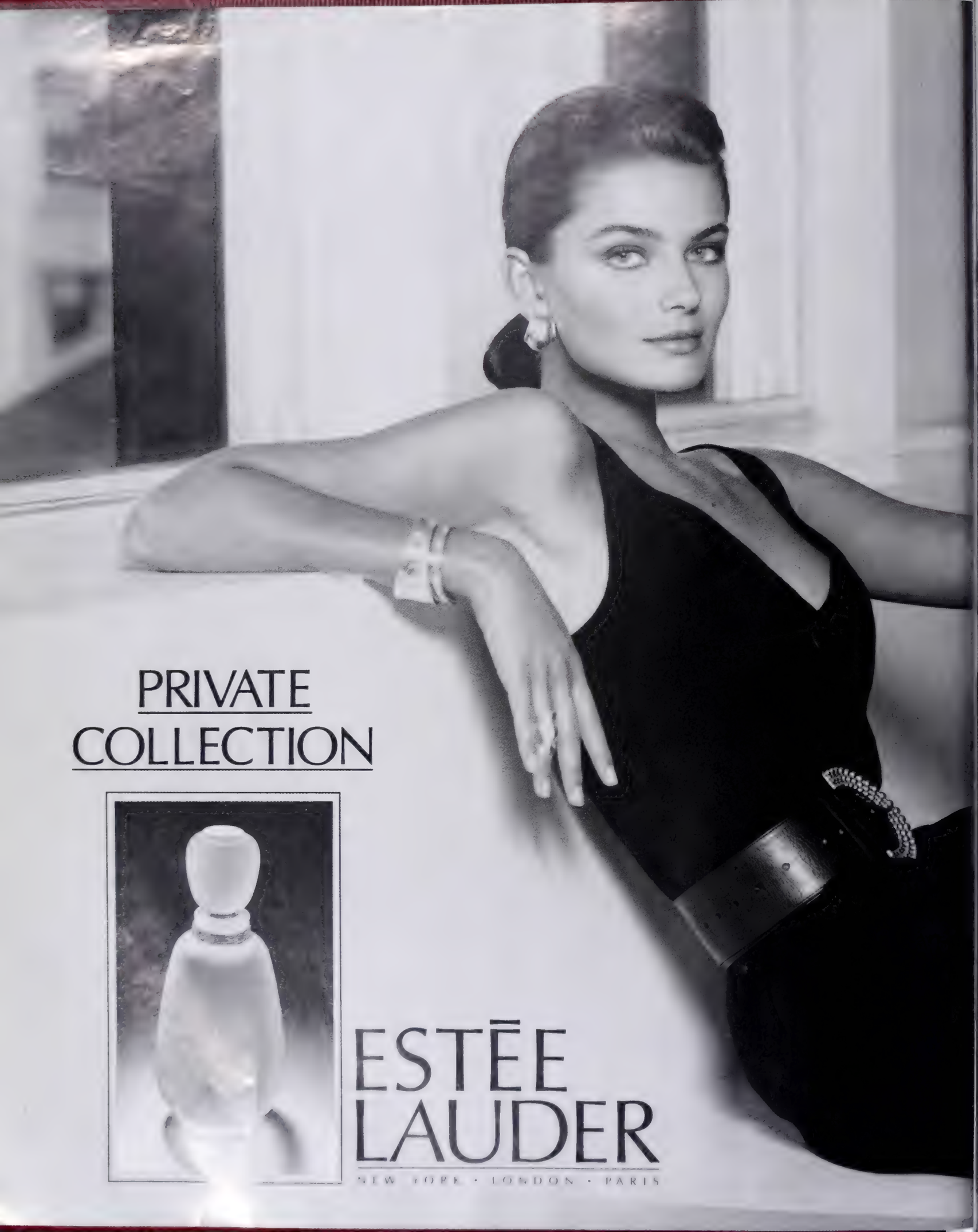
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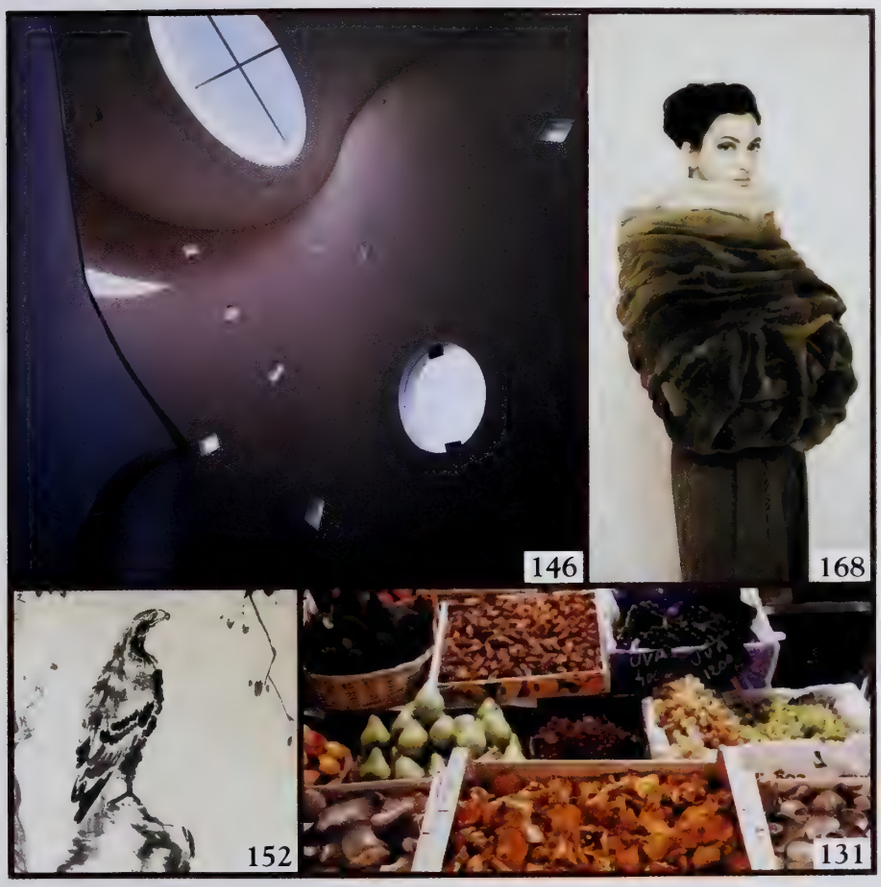

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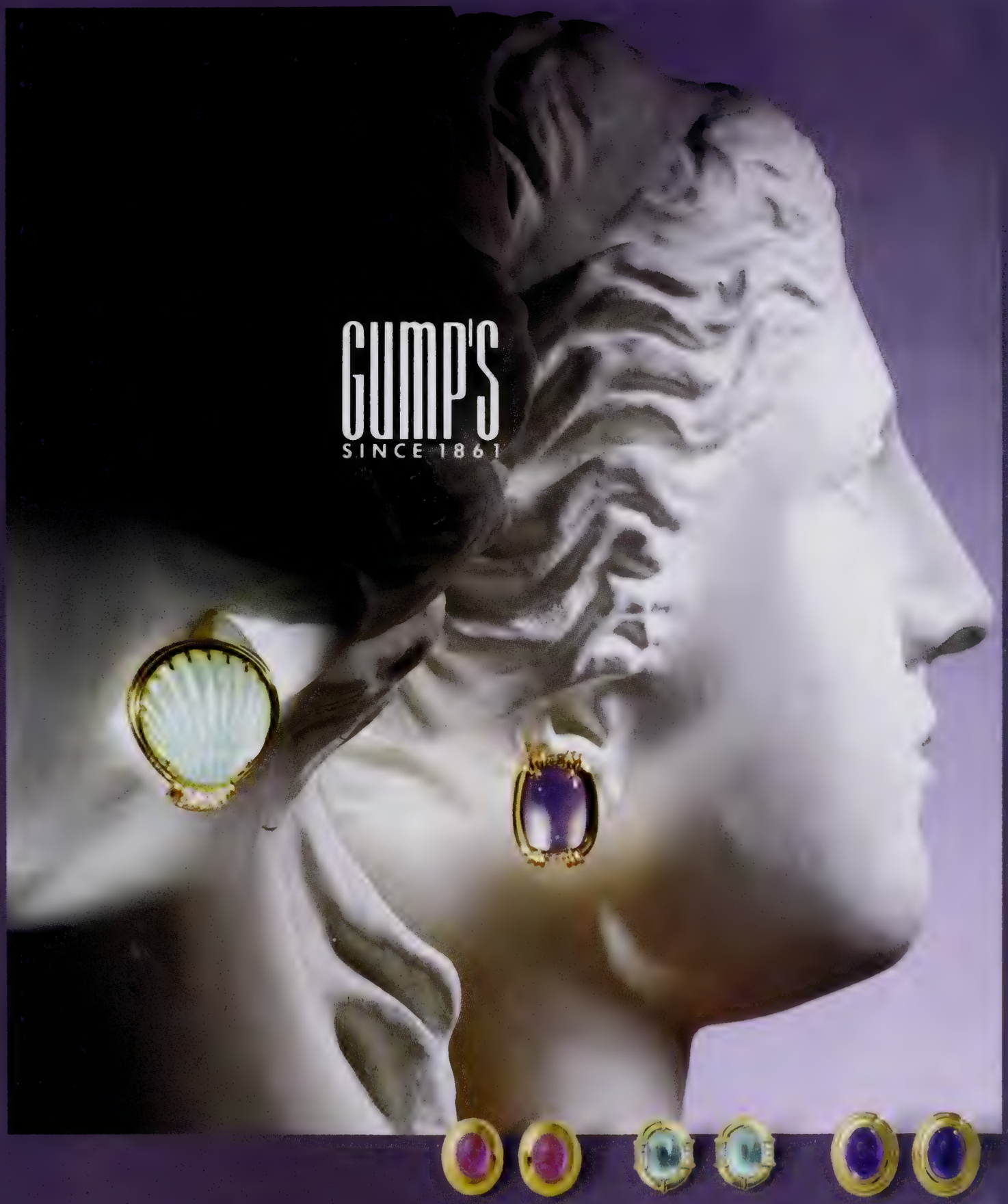

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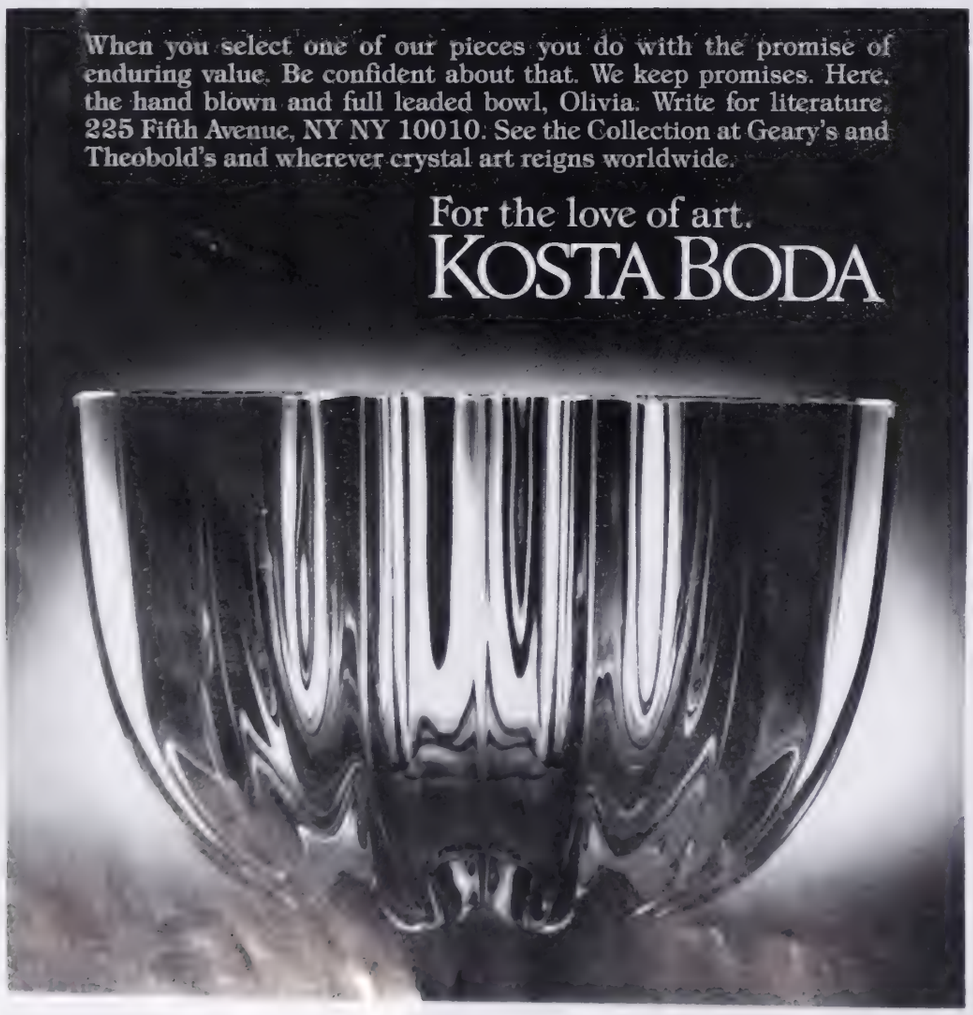

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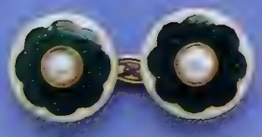

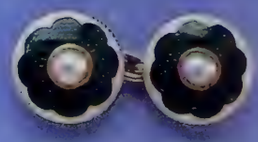

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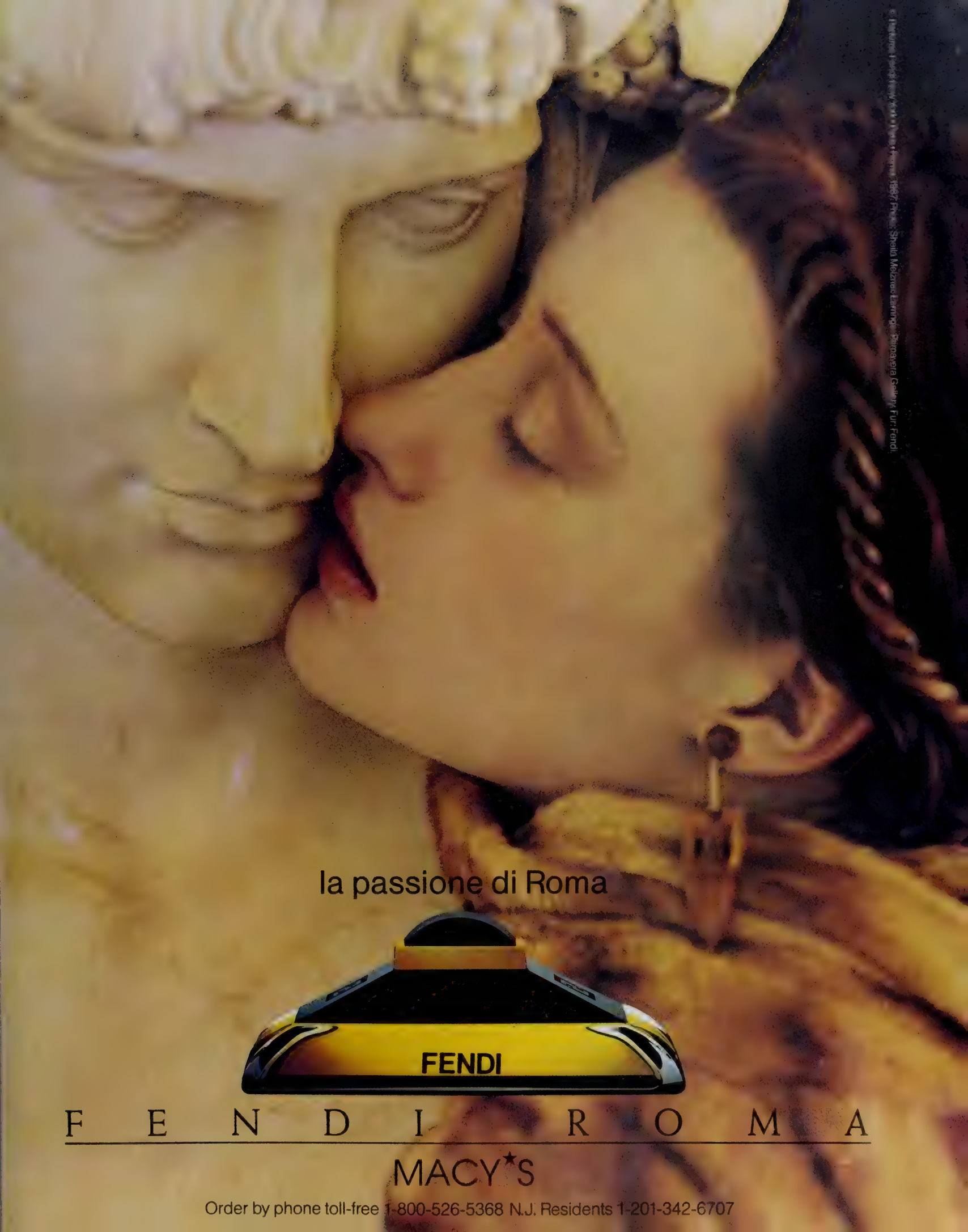
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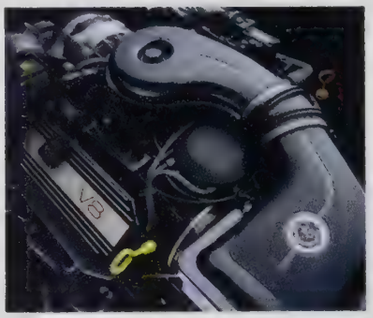

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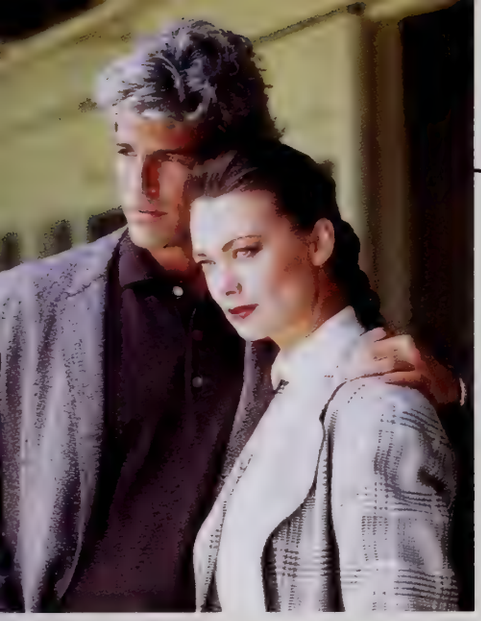

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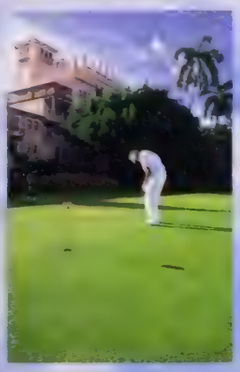

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SLEEPING GIANTS AND NIMBLE DWARFS

American orchestras have traditionally been divided into the "Big Five" and all the rest. Chicago, Cleveland, Philadelphia, New York, and Boston are America's world-class orchestras: they are supposed to attract the most distinguished music directors and guest conductors and to play the best; they record and broadcast their concerts on radio, and sometimes on television; they tour the planet. They make music for posterity. The rest, in this scheme of things, are compensation for less fortunate local communities.

Things are not quite so clear-cut anymore. The Big Five have become sleeping giants, lulled into mediocrity by stuffy programming and uninspiring leadership; and at a time when the major orchestras are falling consistently short of expectations, more attention is being paid to the ensembles of Baltimore, Los Angeles, St. Louis, and, lately, San Francisco. Record companies are flocking to their orchestras, and so are audiences when they tour. The Baltimore Symphony can now sell out Carnegie Hall two nights in a row when it plays Beethoven under its director, David Zinman, while New Yorkers ho-hum Zubin Mehta's performances with the local band.

The anemic Big Five are being given a run for their money. Their directors can be relied upon to deliver performances that are predictably polished, but little more. It is rare for Boston's lightweight Seiji Ozawa, Chicago's brazen (if not downright vulgar) Sir Georg Solti, Cleveland's sincerely musical but dramatically dull Christoph von Dohnanyi, Philadelphia's increasingly pompous if still charismatic Riccardo Muti, or New York's flashy Mehta to turn an everyday performance into a musical event the way their more notable predecessors did. And notwithstanding an occasional premiere or adventurous modern work, these conductors reprogram the same, standard works season after season.

Meanwhile, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, when it performs under Pierre Boulez (who spends a month or more in residence every other season), can rise to greatness, and it is often very fine under its director, André Previn. The Baltimore Symphony under David Zinman plays superbly in its new Telarc recording of Berlioz showpieces. The St. Louis Symphony, now playing a well-prepared program under its director, Leonard Slatkin, is nothing less than a virtuoso band. And even the San Francisco Symphony, never before a showy ensemble, has begun making quality discs for London/Decca Records. None of these conductors brings the insight of a Bernstein or a Tennstedt to the standard repertoire—but unlike the Big Five conductors, none makes the pretense of trying to.

What most distinguishes the would-be second-tier symphonies these days is a certain freshness to music making. What attracted so much attention to the Baltimore Symphony's Beethoven in Carnegie Hall last summer, for instance, was not Zinman's interpretations but his experimenting with historical performance practices, such as his adopting Beethoven's rarely followed metronome markings. His was a new and different Beethoven—light, refreshing, and fast as the wind, if perhaps too featherweight for some tastes. And adding to the musical excitement in Baltimore is the orchestra's composer-in-residence, the irreverent and riotous Christopher Rouse.

In Los Angeles, Previn, with his taste for twentieth-century British, Russian, and American music, probably now puts on the most varied and unusual programs of any major American orchestra's. Slatkin has made the St. Louis Symphony a prominent orchestra by his attention to American music, both neglected classic scores and new, neo-Romantic compositions, and by his colorful performances. And in San Francisco, Herbert Blomstedt, who can be a terrible plodder in standard

repertoire, turns in good performances of seldom heard Scandinavian scores and has risen to the occasion of his first recordings. His exciting record of the usually uncommercial orchestral music of Hindemith soon entered the *Billboard* charts.

Not all is quite so rosy in the second rank. Washington's National Symphony has failed to improve significantly under

CHRISTIAN STEINER

Original-style Beethoven and an iconoclast's verve: David Zinman leading the Baltimore Symphony.

Mstislav Rostropovich. Still, he can offer far more deeply emotional performances than any Big Five music directors. The most interesting action in American symphonies these days tends to be where you least expect it. —*Mark Swed*

DRAWING FROM THE SPIRIT

Around the turn of the nineteenth century those petty kingdoms and principalities that added up to "Germany" were in a ferment of creativity. Music, literature, and philosophy produced revolutionary scores and texts. In the visual arts German achievements did not travel so far, though what was created between 1800 and 1850 was arresting and original.

A window on this little-known art is opened by a loan exhibition at the Pierpont Morgan Library, in New York, entitled "The Romantic Spirit: German Drawings, 1780–1850, from the German Democratic Republic" (November 17–January 29). In 125 drawings and watercolors a spirit and sensibility not far removed from the music of Schubert and Mendelssohn are revealed.

COURTESY THE PIERPONT MORGAN LIBRARY, NEW YORK

"The Germanic eye for detail": Georg Friedrich Kersting's drawing of Caspar David Friedrich in the mountains (1810).

The best-known of these artists is Caspar David Friedrich. Though his work expresses intensely personal religious feeling, it is founded on the deep study and love of nature that was at the heart of the Romantic movement. The seashores he drew, with anchors half buried in sand and ships ghosting on the water, teem with symbols of faith, death, and afterlife. No gnarled oak that Friedrich drew, no path, mountain, or twilit ruin was without mystical significance. Yet even when their iconography is ignored, his landscapes breathe the meaning of vivid dreams.

A figure at a window, back turned toward us, haunts the work of these Romantic artists. One of the first such images was a drawing of Goethe in his Roman apartment done in 1787. Friedrich drew numinous pictures of his studio windows overlooking a river, with no human presence. We see Friedrich himself walking away from us with a satchel (no doubt containing a newly invented graphite pencil) strapped to his back to draw nature at first hand. A self-portrait shows us his face, eyes meeting their mirrored reflection with searching intensity.

Portraits are among the most striking drawings in the show: the architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel's little daughter playing with seashells; a handsome young woman with blowing hair casting a coolly challenging look at the man drawing her; a luminous pencil portrait of a duchess, all pale, troubled eyes and tender mouth.

These artists admired the medieval, seeking the innocence of an age of faith, and painted soaring Gothic buildings or hypnotic biblical scenes that foreshadow the art of the Pre-Raphaelites, who are recalled too by the Germanic eye for

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After stays in [illegible] the first major Degas retrospective in fifty years has come to New York's Metropoli[illegible] [illegible] nuary 8, 1989). Above: *Hortense Valpinçon* (1871).

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detail. Cloud formations are scrupulously observed, and the smallest furnishing of a room, the twist of a fashionable coiffure, the creases of rumpled bedclothing.

The land where the lemons bloom lured them: many studied and lived in Rome, drawing its *campagna*, cloisters, and domes. They painted fairies and historical allegories. At the same time, the unassuming charms of everyday life were fondly observed. Fashionable ladies in veiled bonnets sit at a concert; a party in a summer house listens to a man reading something uplifting aloud; a room furnished with piano and stool, mirror, and open window exudes domestic tranquillity.

"The Germans have a reason for every work of art," said an Englishman in 1839. Theory-bound they could be, yet at their best they are lyrical and haunting.—*E. A.*

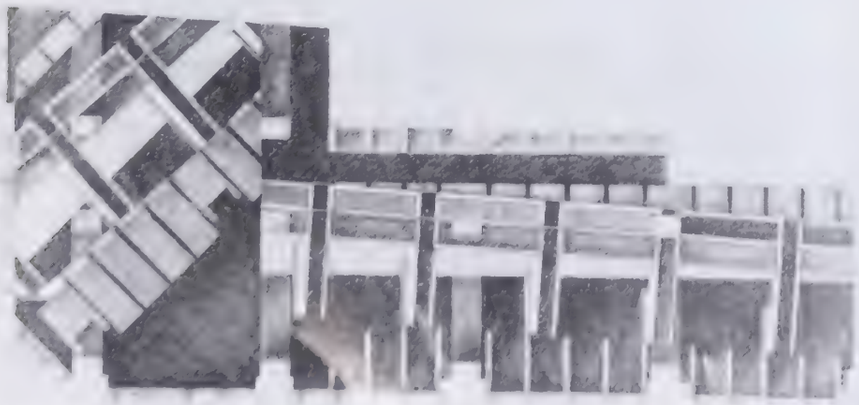
JEFF GOLDBERG-ESTO (2)

THE DANGERS OF LIVING IN A POEM

Before he met his clients Emily Fuller and her husband, Newby Toms, Peter Eisenman was not thinking about designing a residential interior. Mainly an architect, theorist, and teacher, Eisenman had in 1983 won the competition to design the Wexner Center for Visual Arts, at Ohio State University—the first commission that would allow him to see construction on a major project. When the Fuller-Toms loft commission came along, Eisenman, working in collaboration with the New York architect Faruk Yorgancioglu, the coprincipal on the project, treated the oddly shaped interior (the loft is a long, 4,800-square-foot parallelogram) as a potential laboratory for his unimplemented ideas. The clients wanted a living space by one of the country's most unorthodox architects. Each party got rather more—and less—than it bargained for.

Had it not been for the exorbitant cost, Eisenman would have had the ceiling covered in maple flooring, in a verbatim reflection of the loft's original parquet. That is one clue to Eisenman's approach to the loft, which was to bring attention to, "comment on," and disrupt the conceptual and formal elements that define the space. (Some of those elements had to be brought to light again: the floors and windows, for example, were stripped down to the original, Victorian-era wood.) Eisenman, who has been called a deconstructivist architect, refers to these techniques as a "responsive reading" of the loft, as if architectural space were a text to which he was adding his own, lyrical commentary. Dispensing with the traditional room arrangement, Eisenman devised a series of glass-paneled sliding doors that section the main length of the loft into semi-open spaces. Wanting to unhinge even such givens as top and bottom, horizontal and vertical, Eisenman also conceived a series of boxlike architectural elements dubbed stalactites, which protrude from the ceiling and the large open end of the loft and

How does an Eisenman mean? Top: The stalactite-rimmed living space. Above: Down the corridor, red screens set apart the kitchen and other rooms. Below: The architect's drawing.



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serve as visual quotations of the string of windows that run along its length. The cluster of stalactites is only one of several white, boxy elements protruding from the ceiling or articulating the major room divisions, making the loft feel as if it were one big, walk-in minimalist sculpture.

To understand what he designed, Eisenman says, "you've got to read the loft like poetry, as something other than functional, visual, structural—and let it speak to the unconscious." Whether or not his pronouncement is merely overstuffed theoretical furnishings, at least one of the loft's inhabitants wishes that the architect had spoken more directly to her conscious. Fuller, a painter, had an essential requirement—a large painting studio. What she got, after much haggling, was a smaller studio, tucked in the back of the loft but at least shorn of what she considered to be Eisenman's interfering embellishments. Her husband, a lawyer, turned out to have more appreciation for the space, with its profusion of rhythmic visual forms. Fuller, who is not reluctant to call herself "a victim of the tyranny of the architect," says she should have pushed harder for what she wanted. With the cost of the project nearing three times the original estimate, and the cabinetry still unfinished four years after construction began (at least according to the clients—Eisenman says they exaggerate), the loft seems to tell a textbook cautionary tale about the conflicting imperatives of architecture theory and practical needs. Still, it is an austerely beautiful place to look at and live in.

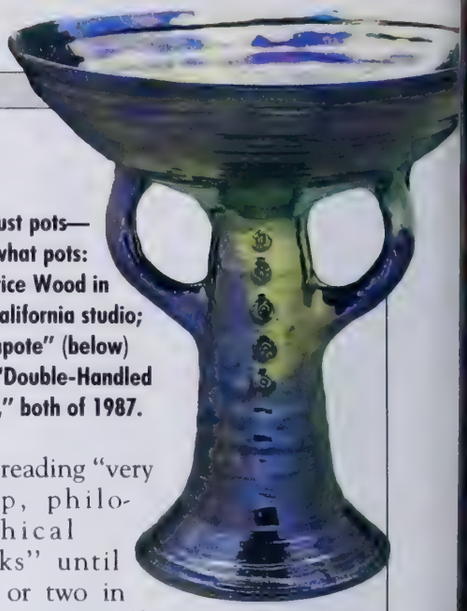
—Donna Dorian

BEATRICE WOULD

From her idyllic home and studio high on a ridge above the Ojai Valley, in southern California, the ceramist Beatrice Wood [illegible] and the Almighty have had several long talks recently and they have worked out her future.

"I had a great communion with God and he's approved my plan," says Wood, who is ninety-five. "In my next life I get to be a polygamist. I intend to die soon and marry a royalist and a Communist. One man has never been enough."

COURTESY GARTH CLARK GALLERY, NEW YORK AND LOS ANGELES (3)



Not just pots—and what pots: Beatrice Wood in her California studio; "Compote" (below) and "Double-Handled Bowl," both of 1987.

That is an old complaint. When she was in her twenties and an aspiring actress and artist in New York, during the First World War, Wood consorted with Henri-Pierre Roche, author of *Jules et Jim,* as well as the legendary artist Marcel Duchamp and became an accomplice in Duchamp's art high jinks.

Aside from intimations of exciting immortality, what chiefly emerges from Wood's Ojai studio is a stream of remarkably shaped pottery finished in iridescent glazes. "Not knowing chemistry, I try anything, good or bad," Wood says, adding that the lusters of gold, copper, and viridian are achieved by a version of a Persian sixth-century technique in which the oxygen is evacuated from the kiln. Wood says she does it her own way, by adding mothballs.

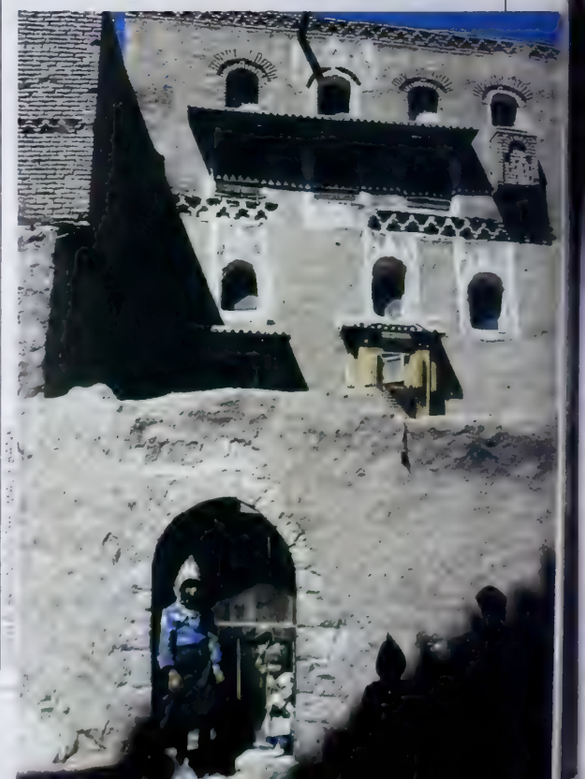
The interest in her work has never been more intense. Her latest pieces, which currently sell for as much as $25,000, will be shown at the Garth Clark Gallery, in Los Angeles. Her drawings and paintings were exhibited in Ferrara, Italy, and Los Angeles this past summer, and a full-blown Wood retrospective is scheduled at the Oakland Museum for fall 1989.

Wood remains, despite her years, a contented workaholic, going to work in her studio at seven in the morning, throwing pots, greeting visitors to the showroom that is part of her "[illegible] porches," and reading "very deep, philosophical books" until one or two in the morning. "She's just as naughty, as wicked and as mean as ever," says Ram Pravesh Singh, a onetime Indian diplomat who is her longtime associate and intellectual sparring partner in Ojai. "I love this place," says the art world's most active nonagenarian. "I love the mountains. They set me free to do what I want. Of course it's probably chocolates that keep me going, too." *Beatrice Wood, at the Garth Clark Gallery, 170 South LaBrea, Los Angeles; (213) 939-2189; November 5–30.* *—Don Stanley*

SAVING SANA

In early afternoon, as the bustle of the marketplace slows down, men with craggy faces begin to gather there dressed in Western-style plaid jackets over traditional male skirts, turbaned, a dagger at the

These high-rises are turning to dust, but the rescuers know a thing or two about menaced monuments.



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waist, and perhaps a sporty metal watch at the wrist. This is Sana, capital of North Yemen, on the Red Sea, at the hour of *qat*—when men chew the stimulating leaf and lounge in the shade, and the few women on the streets go to the well carrying colorful plastic baskets, along narrow alleys flanked by seven-story medieval buildings. The thousands of tall buildings in the ancient center of the city, some as high as the mosques' minarets, are unique in Arab architecture. "It is impossible to observe all the details and draw together into one, synthetic picture all the infinitely rich, diverse, bizarre, and enchanting decoration," Alberto Moravia wrote of these structures, with their lacework bands of whitewash that set off each successive story.

Moravia compared the capital of North Yemen to Venice, sinking into not water but the dust of the desert. He was half

THE TOWERS ARE UNIQUE IN ARAB ARCHITECTURE.

right: the medieval center is threatened, although not by dust but by water from above and below. The possibility of a wholesale disintegration prompted an eleventh-hour rescue operation, now under way, that may yet be able to save it.

Built of large mud bricks that require constant maintenance, the houses are being undermined by the sinking of the water table, depleted by the increased use of electric pumps. The threat from above is the rain in spring and fall: the roofs, of mud and branches, need to be completely restored twice a year. With the modernization that followed the establishment of the republic, in 1962, the inhabitants of the center have been moving to new apartments on the outskirts, abandoning more than two-thirds of the houses, or renting them to migrant workers who cannot look after the houses, which require intensive labor. Each tower originally embodied the traditional Yemeni hierarchical system of the extended family: the patriarch lived on the top floor, and the sons with their wives each had a household below, with the livestock on the ground floor.

The project to save Sana, the restoration phase of which has been implemented since early 1988, has an unlikely benefactor: the Italian government, which has underwritten about 85 percent of the projected cost (the rest will come from the Yemeni government). The work is being done by Studio Quaroni, a private archi-

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"We're hoping that the original owners or their descendants will return to live in the center," explains an engineer for IRI-Italstat, the Italian government agency for engineering and construction, which is also providing support. This is essential to the future of these buildings, he adds, "because the gravest problem is the lack of regular maintenance. There is already a tendency: since the beginning of the eighties, some of the owners have started returning to the family home on Friday, the Muslim holy day; they come to spend the day, even if their parents are dead, and they make little repairs on the house."

But how can Italy justify spending almost $6 million to restore a foreign treasure at a time when classical temples corrode in Sicily, antiquities are stolen from ancient sites, and Milan's Brera collection of paintings has been damaged (last spring, in a climate-control mishap)? The most likely motive for Italy's largess, which is being channeled through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is to generate goodwill for Italy among the Yemenites, who in January 1988 opened oil fields that should yield some $600 million in oil by the end of this year. —*Abigail Asher*

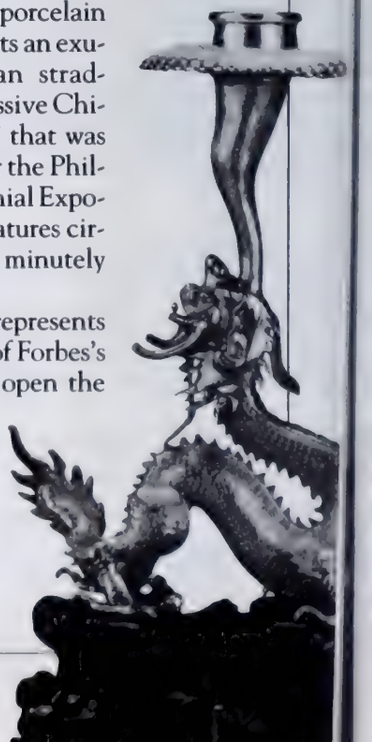
IMPORTANT EXPORT

To the other collectors at a recent New England antiques show, it was nothing more than an oddly flamboyant red-lacquer Queen Anne settee with gold trim; to H. A. Crosby Forbes, it was nothing less than a masterpiece. "I looked at the medallion of a dormouse and grapevine," he recalls. "Only the Chinese did that." Sure enough, the impeccably preserved four-seater turned out to have been made 250 years ago in Canton and now can be found in the new Asian Export Art Wing of the Peabody Museum in Salem, Massachusetts, where Forbes is curator.

Dutch-inspired Japanese gin dispenser (ca. 1700–1740).

Opened last May, the wing is the first major museum space devoted solely to Asian decorative arts made for trade with the West. "There was tremendous interchange between Asian and Western arts," says Forbes, and the museum's 10,000-piece collection constitutes a living history of that remarkable relationship. The wing's galleries, organized according to type of object and origin, display examples of porcelain, silver, furniture, ivory, lacquer, and paintings, from China, Japan, India, Indonesia, and elsewhere, that blend Oriental decorative motifs with traditional Western forms. Ebony *torchères* from Sri Lanka, dating back to 1760, stand on three-buckle-shoe feet; an eighteenth-century Japanese porcelain gin dispenser sports an exuberant Dutchman straddling a cask; a massive Chinese "moon bed" that was specially made for the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition of 1876 features circular uprights of minutely inlaid ivory.

The new wing represents the culmination of Forbes's lifelong effort to open the



In the atrium of the new Asian Export Art Wing of the Peabody Museum; right: a Chinese silver candlestick (ca. 1870–1900).

MARK SEXTON/COURTESY THE PEABODY MUSEUM OF SALEM (2)

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art world's eyes to the beauty, craftsmanship, and history of Asian Export art. In 1965, Forbes, the descendant of prominent Boston traders, founded the China Trade Museum; in 1984, that precursor institution merged with the Peabody.

"Crosby has this immense curiosity," says James C. Y. Watt, senior curator of Asian art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. "Very few people of his caliber have taken the subject so seriously." And despite auction prices for Asian Export art, which have, in some instances, increased tenfold, Forbes's impassioned quest continues unabated. "The field itself is a voyage of discovery," he says, with quiet enthusiasm. "In terms of American exploration, we've reached the Mississippi, but the rest of the continent is out there to be explored. The new wing is a base of exploration." —*Daniel Cohen*

RUSSIAN ROULETTE

The Moscow Classical Ballet, which is now touring the country with sixty-five dancers, is a younger, more experimental troupe than the Kirov or the Bolshoi, and this means trouble, for when Russian choreographers try to get experimental they

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Backed by the Chieftains, Van Morrison (center) recharges old Irish tunes with a hardscrabble power.

become uniquely ham-handed. Witness *The Creation of the World,* a neo-sexy, corny-joke-filled rendition of Genesis by Natalia Kasatkina and Vladimir Vasilov, the troupe's directors. When this ballet had its premiere, in Leningrad in 1971, it starred a twenty-three-year-old named Mikhail Baryshnikov, whose sudden, wildfire leaps—upside down, backward—were a highlight of the production. That highlight having been removed, however, *The Creation* is not a good bet.

But the company is also bringing a *Romeo and Juliet,* together with a *Swan Lake* that attempts to reproduce parts of the famous Bolshoi version, in which the astonished West saw Galina Ulanova and Maya Plisetskaya in the late fifties. There will also be a potpourri called *Mixed Repertory Evening.* This too is a jokey item: a satire on ballet competitions. But wait: included in it, as the competitors' offerings, are excerpts from such Russian classics as *Raymonda, Don Quixote,* and *The Flames of Paris.* So, the company gets to rise above the classics—oh, those old things?—at the same time that it gets to perform them, and we get to see them. We also get to see Ekaterina Maximova, the great Bolshoi ballerina (Ulanova's protégée), who is leading the Moscow Classical tour and dancing in everything except *Swan Lake.* Maximova is forty-nine, so she might deliver a Nureyev routine—slow collapse in a rain of bouquets—but probably not. Her *Giselle* last winter in Paris was reportedly splendid.

—*Anna Aronofsky*

VAN MORRISON SINGS HIS WAY HOME

Irish traditional tunes are built in circles, returning again and again to their beginnings, revolving—like Irish history—around pains that are almost too tender to touch. It is this music that Van Morrison grew up singing in Belfast, a town where you have to pass armed guards and metal detectors to enter the department stores. Though he never left the jigs and reels completely behind, he worked to escape that past by disappearing even further (as one of his albums is entitled) "into the music." By the time his sixties rock band, Them, had a Top 10 hit, with "Gloria," he sounded more like Ray Charles than a kid from Ulster. And the transformations continued as he moved to Woodstock, New York, and released now classic records like *Astral Weeks,* filled with his particular strain of "Celtic soul." In the last decade, he has removed himself almost entirely from mainstream pop, spinning out stunning, often unheard albums drenched in Christian mysticism.

With his latest release, *Irish Heartbeat,* Morrison returns home. It is a record of mostly traditional tunes produced with the major modern interpreters of Irish folk music, the Chieftains, his first with the group. Led by the piper Paddy Moloney and the fiddler Seán Keane, the Chieftains were formed in the late fifties to play the old music the old way: with harps and tin whistles and the bass sound of the *bodhran.*

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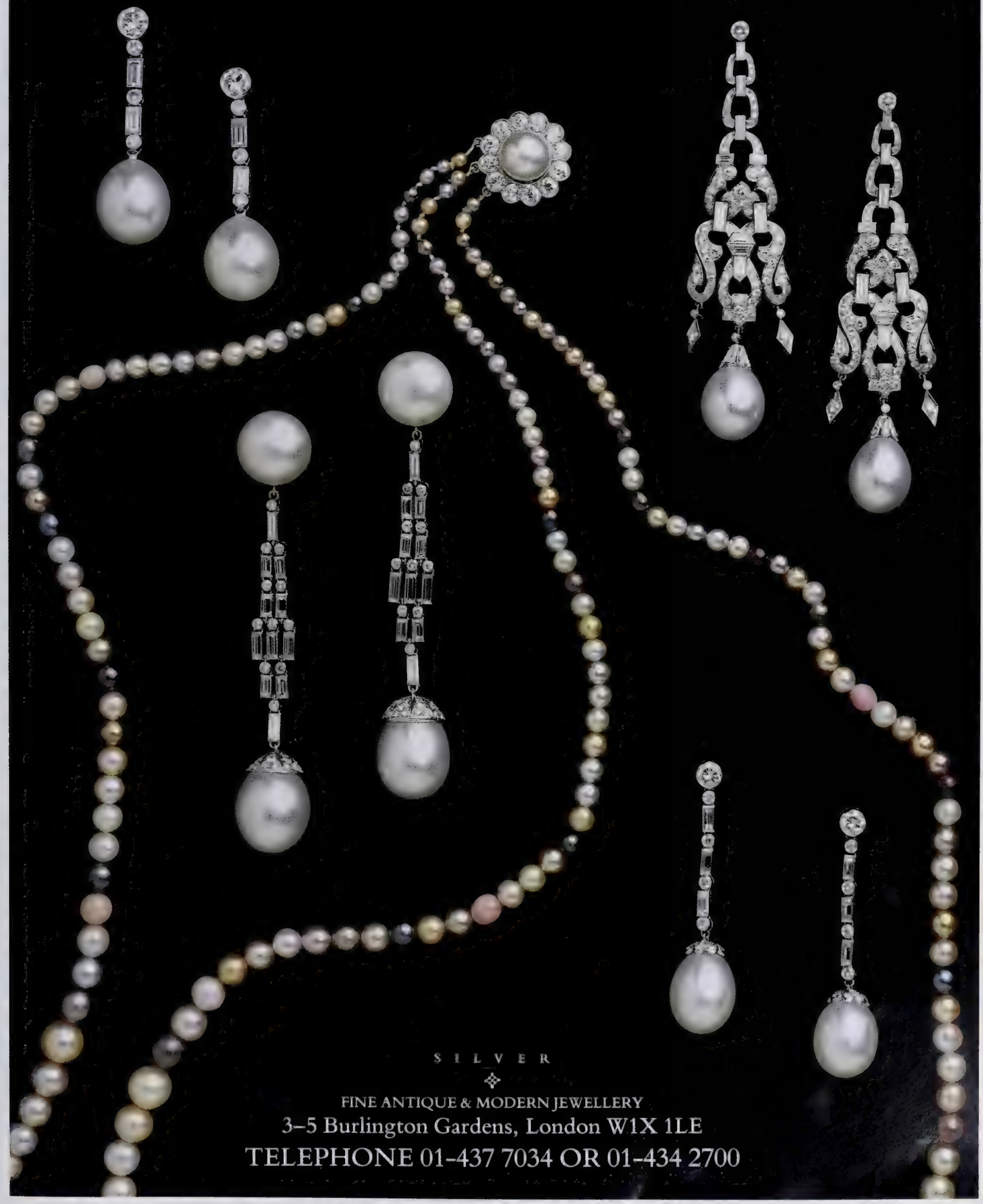

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Illustrated above: Claude Monet, *La plage à Trouville,* signed bottom left *Claude Monet.*, oil on canvas, 18¾ x 29⅛ in. (47.6 x 74 cm.). Painted in 1870.
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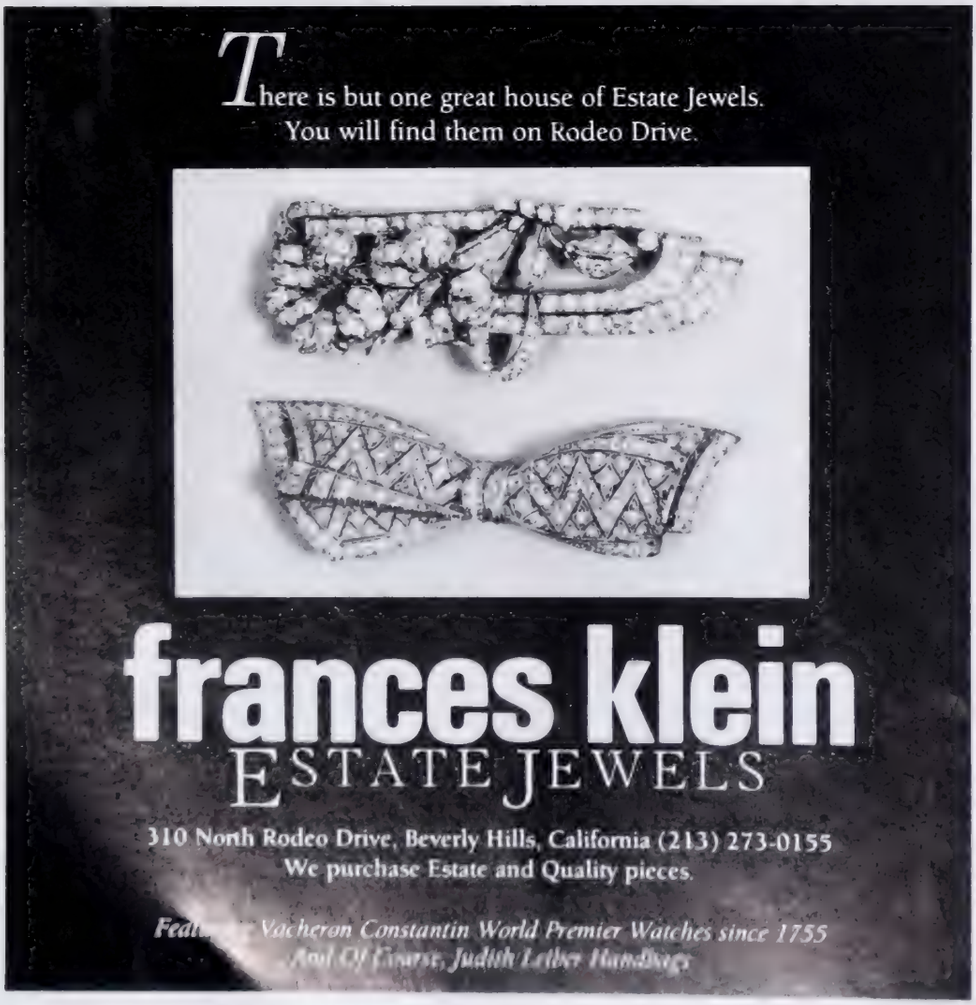

Connoisseur's World

To the millions of their fellow countrymen in Ireland and America, and especially to their large non-Celtic audience, the Chieftains *are* Ireland's musical past. Essentially preservationists, they have changed their sound little over nearly a half dozen albums.

So, *Irish Heartbeat* can be heard as a collaboration between tradition and the sort of rebellion that helped father modern Irish rock bands like U2 and the Pogues. From the quaint opening strains of keyboard and flute of "My Lagan Love" to the dissonant play of pipe and fiddle on "Raglan Road," the record pays tribute to the past. But as soon as Morrison begins singing, these ancient love songs burst open.

IRISH HEARTBEAT IS A COLLABORATION BETWEEN TRADITION AND REBELLION.

Scatting, grunting, getting lost in mesmerizing repetitions, and often overwhelming the placid Chieftains with his passionate dissatisfaction, Morrison pours new meaning into classic romantic lyrics: "No life have I, no liberty/For love is lord of all."

In the tradition of Irish expatriates like James Joyce (is that whom he addresses in his own "Celtic Ray" when he sings, "Listen, Jimmy, I wanna go home"?), Morrison must either transform the burden of his Irish heritage or be consumed by it. "Don't ever stray," sings Morrison, "stray so far from your own ones." And the performer never does.

"I'm a citizen of Europe and America," Morrison has said, "but I *belong* to, specifically, Ulster." *Irish Heartbeat* is full of the timeless joys and sorrows of his besieged country. Like the tough old rover in the song "Carrickfergus," Morrison has returned to take a hard look at his homeland, and to begin again. —*Daniel Wolf*

Ophuls's Dark Epic, Part III

Marcel Ophuls's four-and-a-half-hour documentary *Hotel Terminus: The Life and Times of Klaus Barbie* is a companion piece to his two other major works, *The Sorrow and the Pity*, which dealt with French collaboration and resistance during World War II, and *The Memory of Justice*, which focused on the Nuremberg trials and the nature of war guilt. Like those films, *Hotel Terminus* proceeds from the specific to the all-embracing. The movie is less about the career of Barbie—the notorious "butcher

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of Lyons," who ordered the deaths of over 4,000 people during the Second World War—than it is about the meaning of that career. It is an extraordinary, unwieldy, voluminous achievement: equal parts detective story, philosophical discourse, meditation, and scavenger hunt. *Hotel Terminus* offers further proof that Ophuls

COURTESY THE SAMUEL GOLDWYN COMPANY (2)

Banality of evil: "butcher of Lyons" as family man.

remains the most trenchant and invigorating documentary filmmaker working today.

The film traces the movements of Barbie, who was finally brought to justice last year in France, from his Nazi years through the cold war to his U.S.-abetted escape, and through his leadership of a group of ex–SS men and war criminals known as the "fiancés of death."

Ophuls indicts the cold-war mentality for allowing Barbie to escape for so long his war criminal's fate; his barbarism was allowed to function unchecked by the very forces that had once sought to destroy it. Employed by the United States Army as an intelligence officer against the Soviets, Barbie later fled to Bolivia with the help of the army, the Vatican, and documents supplied by the International Red Cross.

On the trail, trying to make sense of the tale: Marcel Ophuls, with a guard, entering Barbie's cell.

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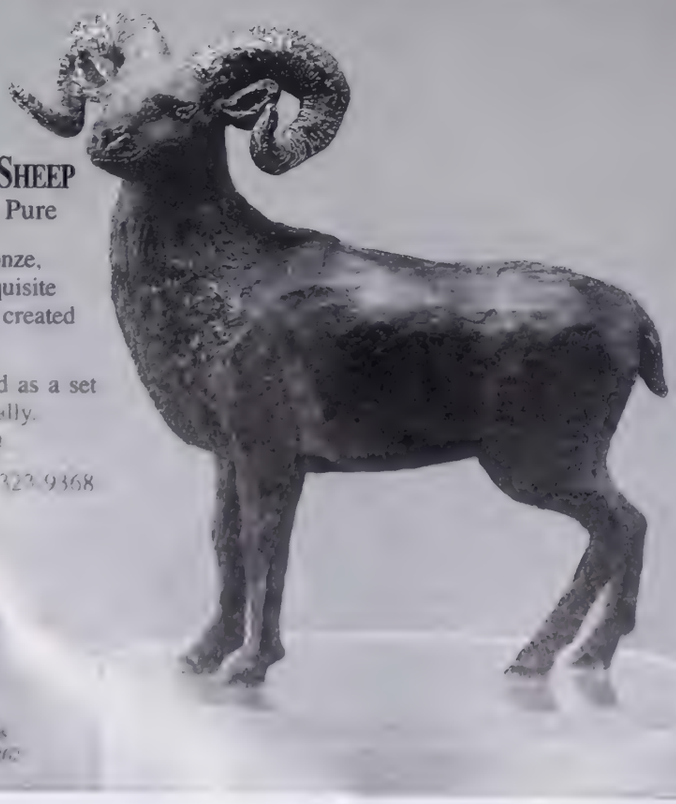

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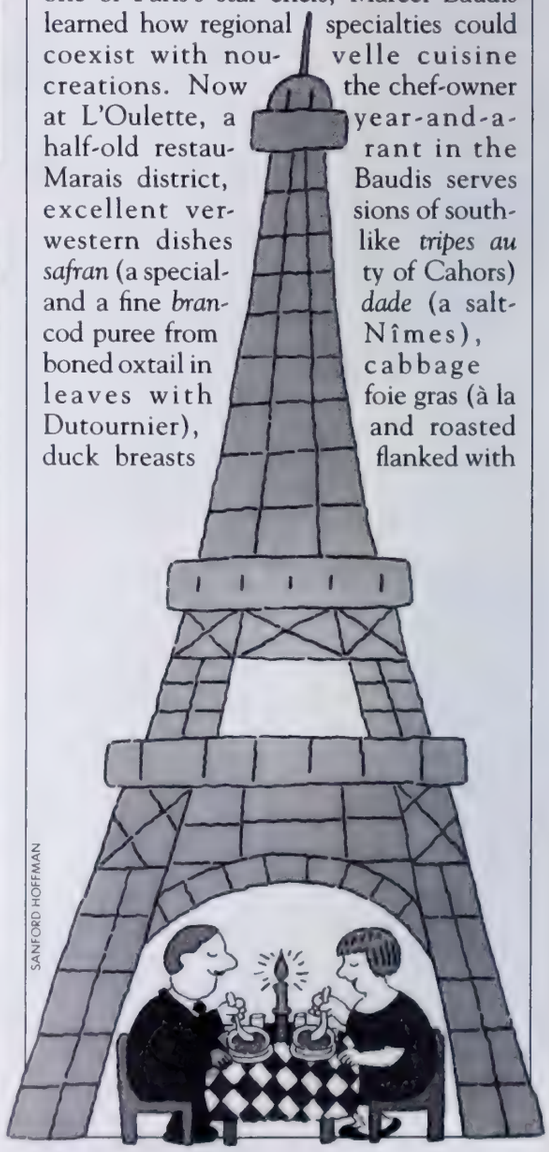
CONNOISSEUR'S WORLD

This first half of the film lacks the characteristic Ophulsian richness, and the acts of complicity have already been extensively documented elsewhere.

But in the second half, when Ophuls brings these acts up to date, when he charts Barbie's intimate involvement with South American fascist military regimes—with torture, concentration camps, death squads, arms smuggling, drug running—the full meaning of the movie's indictment comes through: Barbie represents the linkage between fascist terrorism then and now, and his safe passage over the years points to the condemnable acts of all those democracies that fight one evil by protecting another. *Hotel Terminus* excoriates the quid pro quo. —*Peter Rainer*

A GREAT PARIS BISTRO

While working with Alain Dutournier, one of Paris's star chefs, Marcel Baudis learned how regional specialties could coexist with nouvelle cuisine creations. Now the chef-owner at L'Oulette, a year-and-a-half-old restaurant in the Marais district, Baudis serves excellent versions of southwestern dishes like *tripes au safran* (a specialty of Cahors) and a fine *brandade* (a salt-cod puree from Nîmes), boned oxtail in cabbage leaves with foie gras (à la Dutournier), and roasted duck breasts flanked with



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duck legs simmered in red wine.

The story of this success had a precarious beginning. For months no one came to this small, tucked-away restaurant; Baudis remembers having to throw away, uneaten, his *croustades de petits gris* (a delicious appetizer of snails in pastry with walnuts and garlic) and contemplating an untimely closing. Even though word has now spread and tables are regularly filled, L'Oulette still bears a personal touch: Marie-Noëlle Baudis, married to the chef, is still the only dining-room staff.

The Baudis run what might be called an updated Parisian bistro, at once welcoming and unpretentious, and gastronomically sophisticated and adventurous. *L'Oulette, 38 Rue des Tournelles, 75004 Paris; phone: 42 71 43 33. Closed Saturday lunch and all day Sunday. Visa cards accepted. Prices, including service but not wine: lunch fixed-price menu, 58 francs; dinner fixed-priced menu, 90 francs; à la carte, 110 to 140 francs. Reserve forty-eight hours in advance for dinner.*

—Philip and Mary Hyman

THE RIGHT DUFF

A battlefield veteran, the duffel coat has lately been seen in all sorts of more fashionable maneuvers. Donna Karan has designed a very citified cashmere velour, brass-toggled version that bears some of this fall's most fashionable deep hues—magenta, violet, and topaz—as well as a price tag of around $1,700. A young New York designer named Patricia Clyne is

"IN" AGAIN, THE DUFFEL HAS NEVER BEEN OUT.

making a hoodless duffel in tangerine with black toggles ($575). You could say that the duffel is "in" again, although, like the classic trench coat and the little black dress, the duffel coat has never been out of style. Despite all the new versions, the best news about the duffel is that the original model is still around.

Named for Duffel, a once flourishing Belgian textiles town famed for producing hard-wearing cloth, the duffel was a standard-issue coat to British forces. A convoy coat, as it was also known, had a somewhat shapeless, three-quarter-length design with a distinctive wood toggle-and-rope closing (easy for seamen's cold hands to manipulate), roomy cargo pockets, and an impractical hood that gathered water like a bucket. When duffels were discontinued

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Auctions to be held November 12 through 17, 1988 at the Hotel Richemond in Geneva. Viewing begins November 11. For further information, please contact Christie's Geneva (4122 28 25 44), 8 Place de la Taconnerie, 1204 Geneva, Switzerland or François [illegible] Christie's New York (212/546-1133), 502 [illegible] New York, NY 10022. For catalogues, [illegible] Publications at 718/784-1480.

[illegible] diamond necklace of Imperial [illegible] sold November 17, 1988

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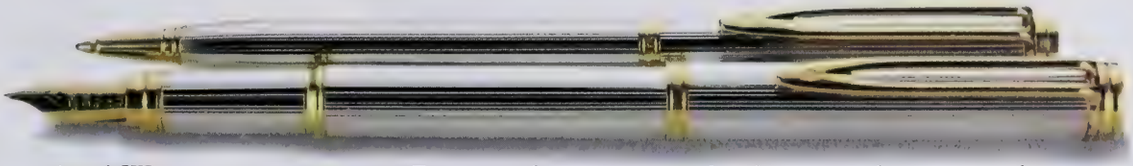

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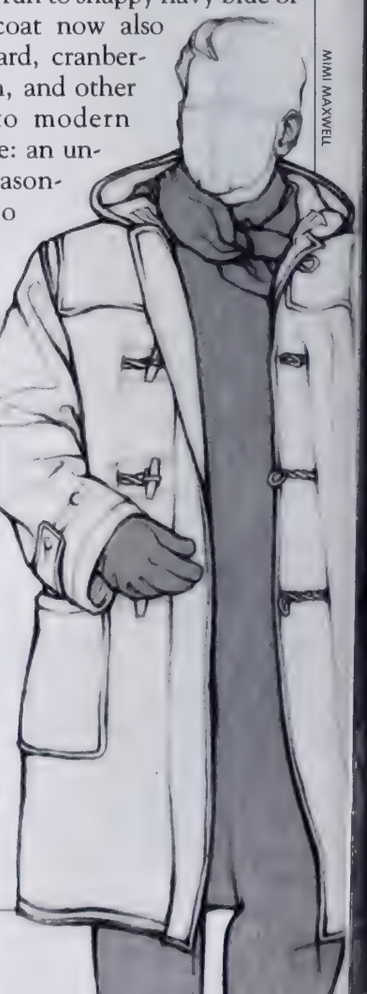
CONNOISSEUR'S WORLD

as standard military wear, after World War II, the British Ministry of Defence sold the surplus to a clothing manufacturer named Gloverall (as the name suggests, it made gloves and overalls). Civilians snapped up the surplus, and soon Gloverall was manufacturing fresh supplies of duffels.

The Gloverall duffel, in traditional navy blue, became the sartorial symbol of social renegades in the 1950s. Angry young men, art students, and beatniks favored the duffel's inexpensive practicality. Stardust got sprinkled onto the duffel when Bing and Perry were seen crooning on TV in the garment; when John Kennedy went hunched against the elements on brooding walks along the Massachusetts coastline, he was as often as not in a duffel.

Gloverall sells tens of thousands of duffels each year in American stores (notably Brooks Brothers, Hart Schaffner & Marx, and Marshall Field's). The company has been wise enough not to muck around too much with the coat's design, modernizing it only sparingly. The traditional length, of thirty-seven inches, has been extended to a more fashionable thirty-nine or forty-six inches, the fabric is softer, and the bucket hood has been replaced by a flat, pancake-style one. The four wood-and-rope-wound toggles remain inviolate, though one can opt for dapper horn and leather. Colors run to snappy navy blue or tan, but the coat now also comes in mustard, cranberry, mossy green, and other concessions to modern taste. The price: an unfashionably reasonable $250 to $500. With only moderate hyperbole, the company claims that "the owner will wear out before the duffel." Even more certainly, it will outlast its encounter with chic.
—*Joni Miller*



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CONNOISSEUR'S WORLD

COOL STUFF

Christian Dior has maintained a stable of sensible-smelling women's fragrances, all playing on the house name (Miss Dior, Diorissimo, and so on) and all of them accurate reflections of a refined, conservative, and rather uninspired perfume company. That image took a startling turnabout with the introduction of Poison. The fragrance's strong character is due mainly to an unusual fruity, somewhat plumlike effect. Instantly recognizable, Poison is controversial, too: most people either love it or hate it.

ROXANA VILLA

Dior has also had a traditional men's fragrance in its line. Eau Sauvage, introduced in 1966, is a cool, floral, citrusy scent that won and retained a very loyal following among conservative fragrance users. Following the logic of Dior's last gambit, and the suggestive name, its new men's fragrance, Fahrenheit (it will be coming here in the fall of 1989), seems destined to be a man's version of Poison.

Fragrance

Just the opposite: Fahrenheit is very decidedly on the cool side. It is a modern *fougère* (French for fern), a category of scent that features lavender, mossy greenness, a geranium floral character. The first *fougère* was Houbigant's Fougère Royale, in 1882. Fahrenheit has rebalanced the classic ingredients of *fougère*, increasing the lavender dramatically, adding a fresh "pepperiness" to the top note, and enhancing the body and dry-down with a broad stroke of musk. The scent also has a wonderful green floral note somewhat reminiscent of hyacinth. Complex and understated at the same time, Dior's Fahrenheit is an elegant reinterpretation of a venerable genre. —*Jill Resnick*

Edited by Robert Knafo

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Sir Anthony Van Dyck, *Portrait of Philip Herbert, 4th Earl of Pembroke and 1st Earl of Montgomery,* oil on canvas, in a fine late 17th century auricular carved wood frame, 52½ × 42½ inches (133.5 by 108 cm). Auction estimate: £200,000–300,000 ($350,000–525,000).

British Paintings 1500–1850

Auction in London: Wednesday, November 16 at 11 am.

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Sir John Everett Millais, Bt., P.R.A., *Portrait of Louise Jopling*, signed with monogram and dated 1879, oil on canvas, by descent in the family of the sitter, 49¼ by 30 inches (125 by 76 cm).
To be sold on November 22. Auction estimate: £150,000–250,000 ($262,500–437,500).

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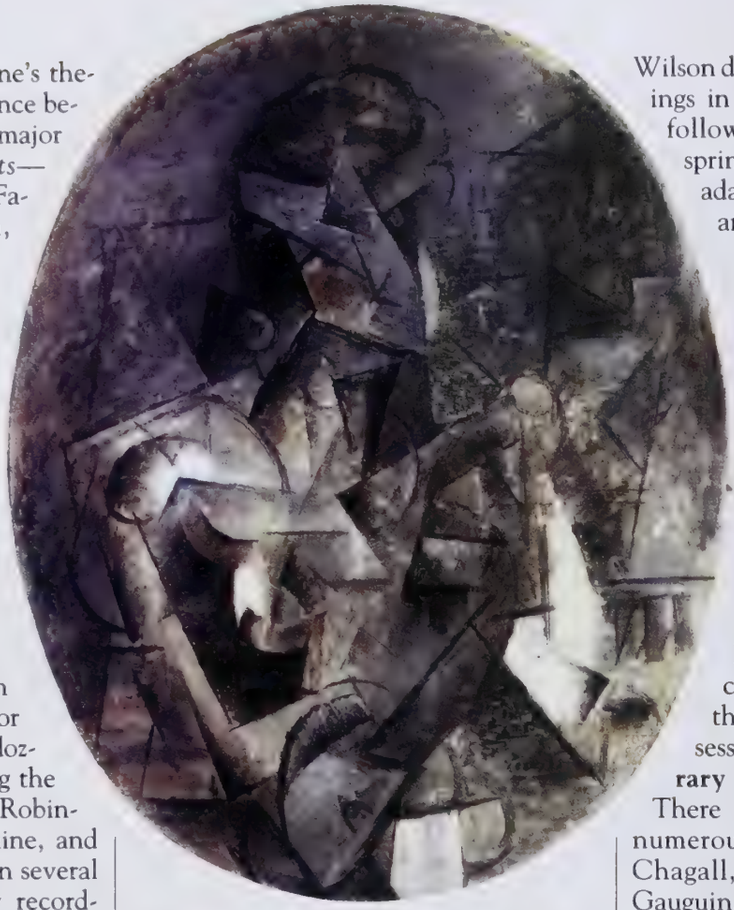
AUCTIONS

INTO HIGH SEASON: MAJOR ESTATES, MAGNIFICENT MAPS, AND MASTERPIECES—MOSTLY MODERN

It would put a strain on anyone's thesaurus to describe the abundance before us this month. There are major sales brimming with *objets*—jewelry, silver, porcelains, Fabergé—at Christie's Geneva, Habsburg Feldman, Phillips, and Sotheby's. Much of it is of great significance, such as the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Continental silver being sold at Sotheby's London from the British Rail Pension Fund collections. The two **Latin American art** sales in **New York** at Christie's and Sotheby's, on the twenty-first and twenty-second, feature some of the best material this burgeoning market has seen in one place at one time. And in both London and New York there are partial or entire dispersals of at least a half dozen important collections, bearing the names of Boone, Ganz, Groves, Robinson (two different ones), Tremaine, and Goetz. This is also a month when several major Picassos—some probably record-breaking—will go on the block.

In addition to the wealth of saleroom activity, two inaugurations are worth noting. Butterfield & Butterfield opens its new Los Angeles salerooms on Sunset Boulevard from the seventh through the eleventh with a series of sales of furniture, decorative arts, jewelry, silver, paintings, and Oriental rugs and carpets. This is an auction house's first attempt at a full-fledged presence in the Los Angeles area since Sotheby's closed its gallery there in 1982. Nonetheless, Sotheby's and Christie's have hunter-gatherer staffs in L.A. and even hold sales—for example, the Sotheby's triannual **jewelry West** session, on the seventh at the Four Seasons Hotel.

Toronto is another potentially large market that gets short shrift from the majors, a situation Phillips seeks to redress with a sale by its Canadian affiliate Ward Price at St. Lawrence Hall, on the twenty-eighth, of what the director Jack Ferguson Wilson describes as "non-Canadian paintings in Canada." Ward Price hopes to follow up with a similar sale next spring, another sign of faith that Canada is part of the increasingly global art market.



A Picasso fest: *Femme à la Mandoline* (1910) . . .

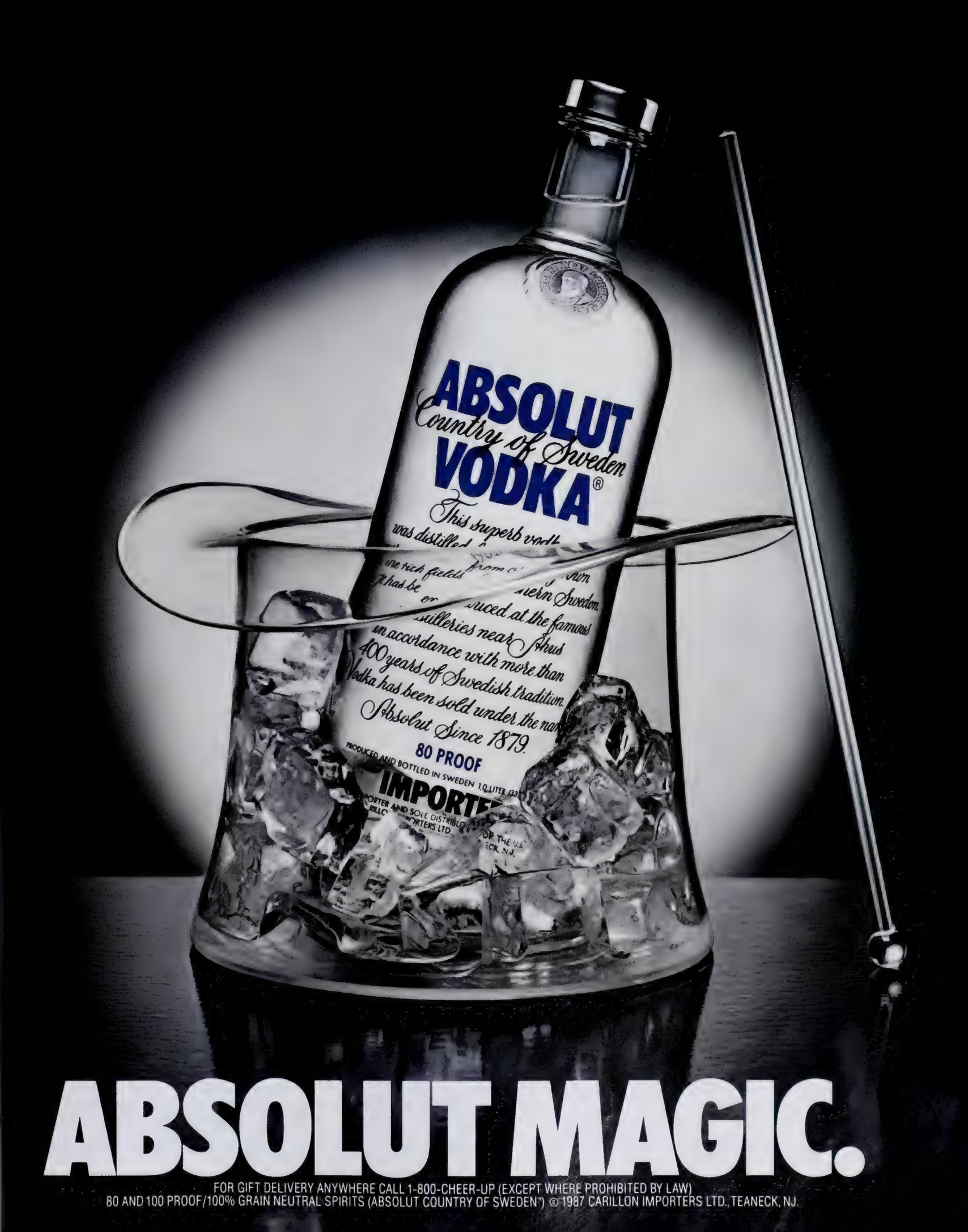
COURTESY SOTHEBY'S NEW YORK

. . . and, at Sotheby's, *The Bird Cage* (1923).

As usual, many of the most entertaining sales on the calendar are at Bonhams in London. On the third and fourth, Bonhams offers politics and sex—the **Sir Lincoln Hallinan collection of political commemorative china** and a sale of **erotica,** an inspired pairing.

The last time we spoke about Impressionists and moderns was on the occasion of the big summer sales in London. Now it is New York's turn to shine in these categories. Christie's leads off on the first and second with several sessions of **modern and contemporary prints and illustrated books.** There is an abundance of work from numerous leading lights—Beckmann, Chagall, Diebenkorn, Frankenthaler, Gauguin, Johns, Matisse, Picasso—but the runaway winner in the bidding wars should be a completely intact set from the Neuerburg collection of the seminal **Brücke Portfolio,** consisting of works by the founders of the Brücke movement (1906–12). Sotheby's has its turn in the limelight on the tenth to the twelfth, when it disperses twelve paintings (including six significant Picassos ranging in date from 1923 to 1959) from the fabled **collection of Mr. and Mrs. Victor Ganz**—most of which should sell for over $1 million. This sale will be followed by other sessions featuring important late oils by Gauguin and van Gogh and brilliant midcareer works by Degas and Renoir. And on the fifteenth and sixteenth one of the two Christie's **Impressionist and modern** paintings sessions, in New York, features nine superb paintings from the Groves collection, including works by Guillaumin, Luce, Martin, Pissarro, and Utrillo. The lion's share of attention, however, should go to Picasso's rare cubist masterpiece of

COURTESY CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK



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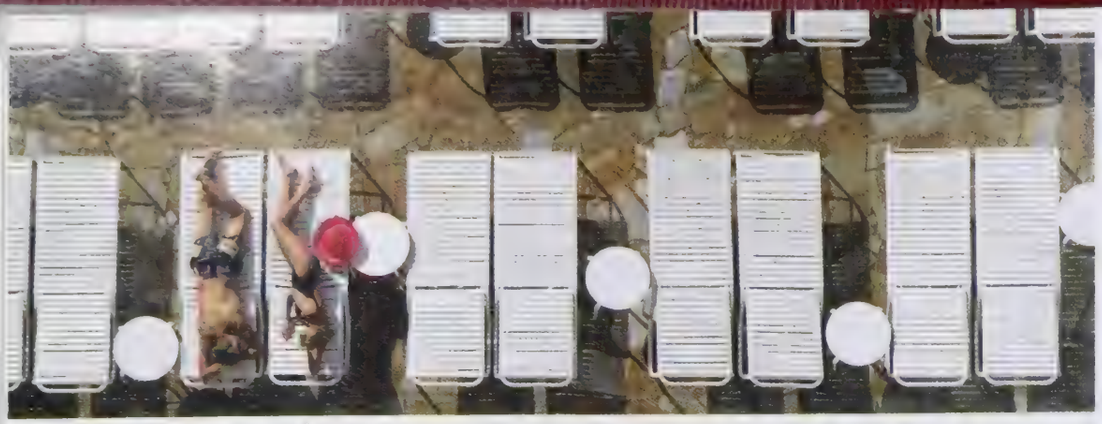

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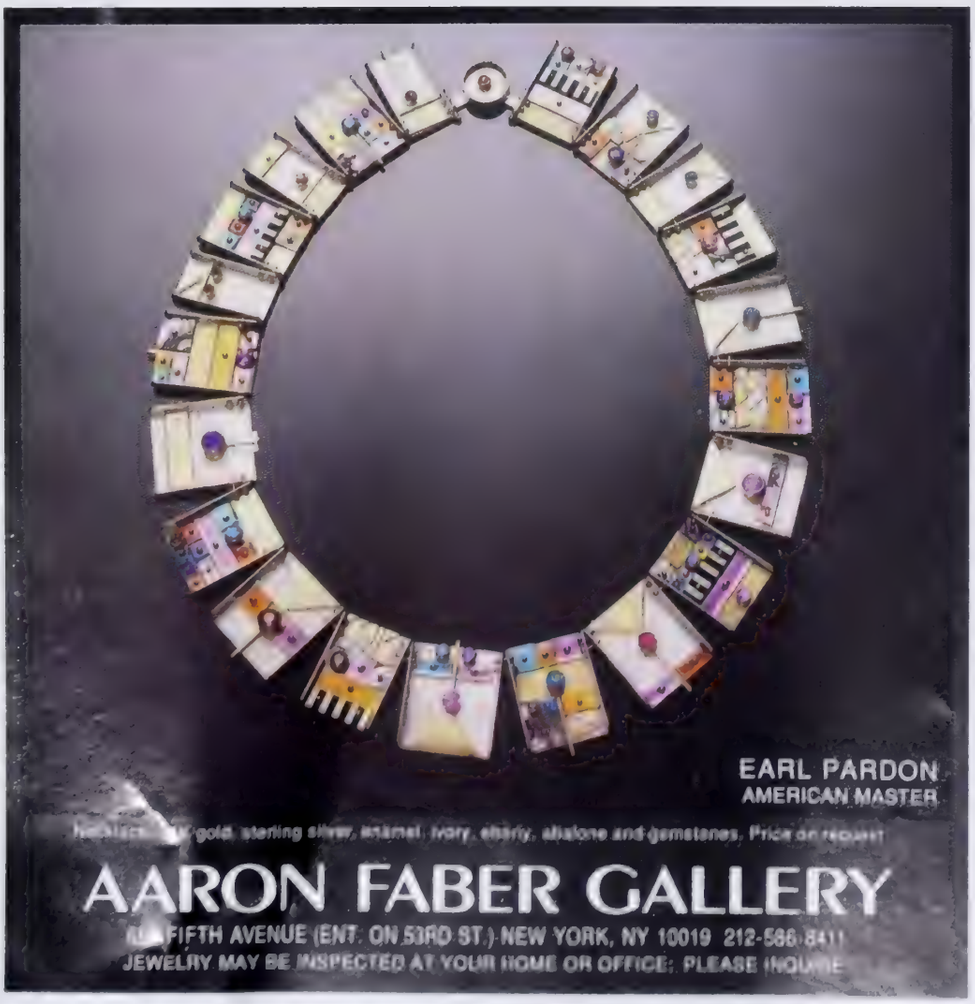

AUCTIONS

COURTESY BONHAMS

At Bonhams, political memorabilia.

1910 *Femme à la Mandoline*. The other Christie's sale of Impressionist and modern pictures, in London on the twenty-eighth, will feature what is being touted as the Picasso that will break the auction record both for a Picasso and for a twentieth-century work of art: the rose-period *Acrobat and Young Harlequin* (1905). Christie's puts the estimate at $17 million. And among the major modern American pictures from the Tremaine collection, also at Christie's on the ninth, are a Jasper Johns *White Flag* and a midfifties Jackson Pollock entitled *Frieze*. Less lavish but no less attractive in some ways is the Phillips New York sale on the fifteenth of **Impressionist, modern, and contemporary paintings, drawings, and sculpture,** with works by Degas, Modigliani, and Toulouse-Lautrec, among others.

Those whose interests run in different directions need have no fear this month. Dramatic, not to say melodramatic, exotic, erotic, and at times verging on unabashed kitsch, the *pompier* spirit is more alive and visible than ever in academe,

Picasso's *Acrobat and Young Harlequin* (1905).

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COURTESY CHRISTIE'S LONDON

At Christie's London's Japanese sale, an Arita.

museums, drawing rooms, and salerooms; note, for example, the **important nineteenth-century pictures** sale at Christie's London on November 25. Anyone wishing to gauge the current allure of Victorian aesthetics ought to consult the estimates attached here to works by Alma-Tadema, Burne-Jones, Lear, and Waterhouse.

On the thirtieth New York's **William Doyle Galleries** presents its always strong fall **Americana** sale with a large group of soigné Federal-period furniture. On the ninth and tenth Christie's London fields a mammoth sampler of **Japanese works of art,** featuring exceptional seventeenth-century Export porcelain and early enameled wares. A session devoted exclusively to prints and screens includes some twenty-five classic erotic prints, lovely Hiroshige material, and a magnificent seventeenth-century six-fold screen from the Kano school depicting stabled horses.

London—Sotheby's, November 16. British paintings. A sale featuring landscapes and portraits by Gainsborough, Lawrence, Romney, Van Dyck, et al. would be enough to cause collectors to stir. A further guarantee of piqued interest is that the material is from such significant private collections as the Boone estate (which is being sold to benefit Johns Hopkins University) and that of the descendants of the late South African diamond millionaire Sir Joseph Robinson. But what makes this a full-blown major event is that the paintings are not only first-rate but frequently of important sitters—Lawrence's *Prince Regent,* later George IV, Gainsborough's *Martha Drummond,* Romney's *Boone Children.*

New York—Christie's, November 18. The John F. Fleming collection. When

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COURTESY SOTHEBY'S LONDON

The world according to sixteenth-century China.

Fleming died, last year, he was the preeminent American rare-books dealer. He had unusually ample time to develop his holdings—his career in rare books began when he was fifteen, in 1925, when he went to work for the legendary dealer A.S.W. Rosenbach. Some idea of the prime material that passed through Fleming's hands is provided by this 400-lot sale—half from his personal collection of impeccable presentation copies of key works by the likes of Wordsworth, Shelley, Darwin, Stevenson, Shaw, Steinbeck, and others; half from the remaining stock of the Fleming Rare Book Company, which includes George Washington's autograph autobiography of 1786 and a rare autograph letter by Martin Luther. The balance of Fleming's inventory will be dispersed by New York's Swann Galleries on November 21 and into next year.

London—Sotheby's, November 22. The Philip Robinson collection of maps, books, and manuscripts relating to China. Perhaps the rarest jewel of this month's selections, the Robinson collection has been judged second only to the Vatican Library's holdings in this particular field. The most interesting material is a set of maps and related mathematical and astronomical material that reflects the remarkable role of such Jesuit scholar-missionaries as Matteo Ricci in the development of Chinese cartography in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Two unique Chinese maps from 1593 and 1602 show that some 100 years after the discovery of America the Jesuits had brought the great news to China. —*James R. Lyons*

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MODERNISM IN LOTUS LAND: THE GOETZ COLLECTION

COURTESY CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK

Among the treasures the Goetzes harbored in Beverly Hills: this early Cézanne, *Dans la Vallée de l'Oise.*

BEN NEUHART

"Later on they added French Impressionist paintings to the new house, which lent itself admirably to an ever-growing collection that was first-rate by any standards," Irene Mayer Selznick wrote about her sister and brother-in-law, Edith and William Goetz. Mrs. Selznick (who was married to the film producer David O. Selznick) and her sister were the daughters of the movies pioneer Louis B. Mayer. The collection assembled by the Goetzes (he was a film executive, too, a founder of Universal–International Pictures) was nearly unique among Hollywood's "royal circle" of the 1940s and 1950s, when the size of one's home and one's jewels was still far more important than the quality of what hung on the walls. Only Edward G. Robinson's collection, among those of Hollywood personalities of the time, could compare to the more than sixty works that the Goetzes (who stopped collecting in 1953) were eventually to own. "[illegible] for Edie," wrote Mr. [illegible] little sisterly [illegible] [illegible]nditure should be conspicuous." At least the Goetzes spent well.

After Mr. Goetz's death, in 1969, Mrs. Goetz (who died earlier this year) sold off about half the collection (including two Cézannes and a ravishing, fauvist-period Matisse). Twenty-eight of the remaining works will be auctioned by Christie's in New York on November 14.

This will be an Event on several levels. First, it opens a window on an era and a life-style that we shall never see again. Second, viewed as a whole—or even as part of the whole—it is the kind of utterly personal collection that is hardly ever found today. And, third, individually the works are very, very good. This is not a collection composed entirely of masterpieces, although a number of pictures in it certainly fall into that category, but it is of very high quality. Among the works to be sold, Monet's *La Plage à Trouville* (1870), a little earlier than but very reminiscent of that artist's great *La Terrasse à Ste. Adresse,* is a standout (estimated at $5 million to $7 million), as is a Degas sculpture, *Petite Danseuse de Quatorze Ans,* the second of fourteen original casts (another of which

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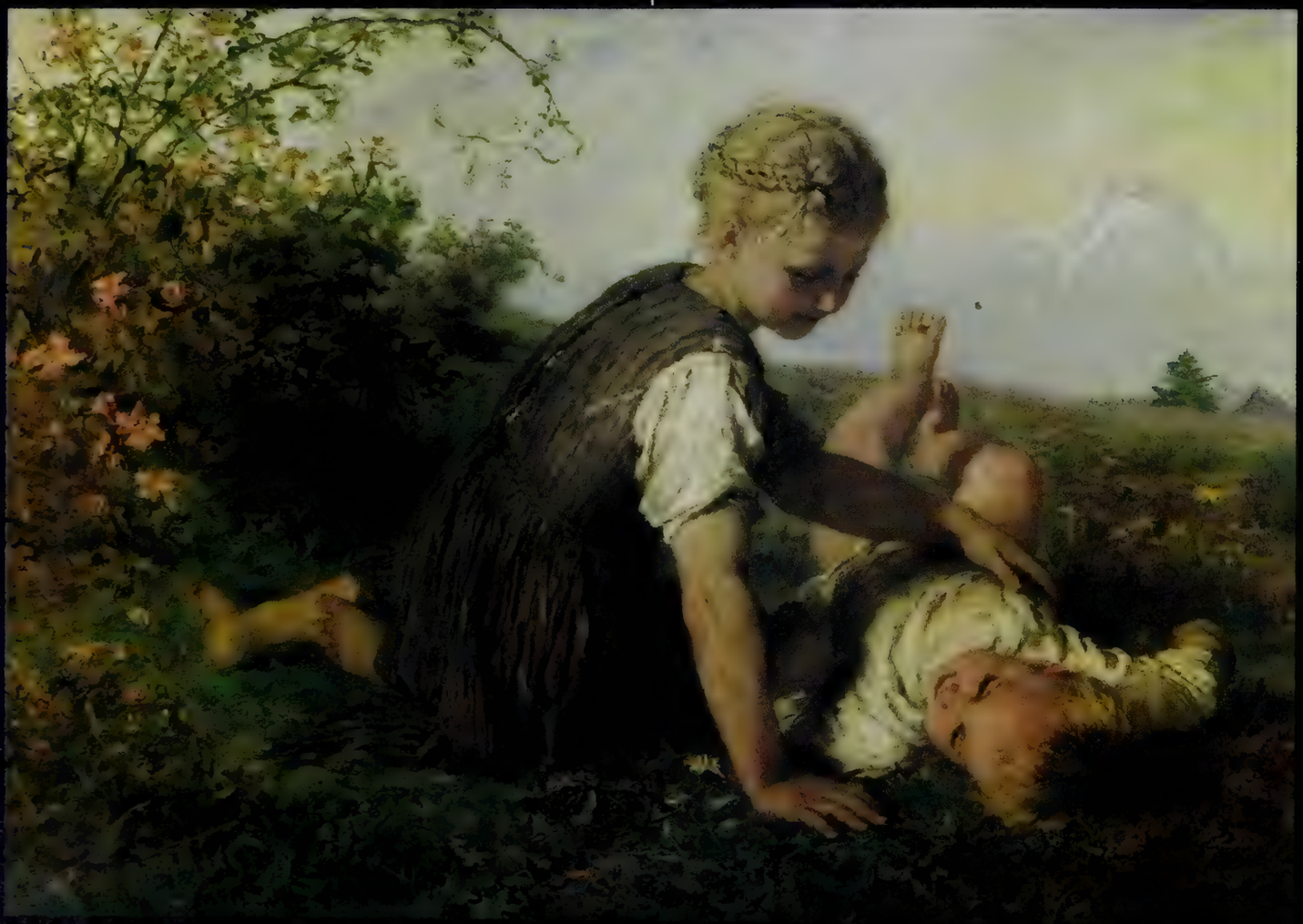

Carl Wilhelm Fredrich Bauerle (German, 1831-1912), *An Autumn Idyll*. Signed l.l.: C. Bauerle 1877. Oil on canvas, 32½ × 46¼ inches (82.6 × 117.5 cm).

PROVENANCE: National Art Gallery of South Wales, Sydney, Australia; circa 1879 to February 1959 (accession no. 733).
Collection Mr. V.A. Evans, Australia.
Collection Mr. Christopher Day and Mr. Edward Barkes, Sydney, Australia, acquired September 15, 1987.

EXHIBITION: Sydney, Australia, *Australian International Exhibition*, 1879.

LITERATURE: Ulrich Thieme and Felix Becker *Allgemeines Lexikon der Bildenden Kunstler*, vol. 3 (Leipzig: Veb E.A. Seeman Verlag, p. 72).
E. Benezit, *Dictionnaire critique et documentaire des peintres, sculpteurs, dessinateurs et graveurs*, vol. 1 (Paris: Librairie Gründ, 1976), p. 523.

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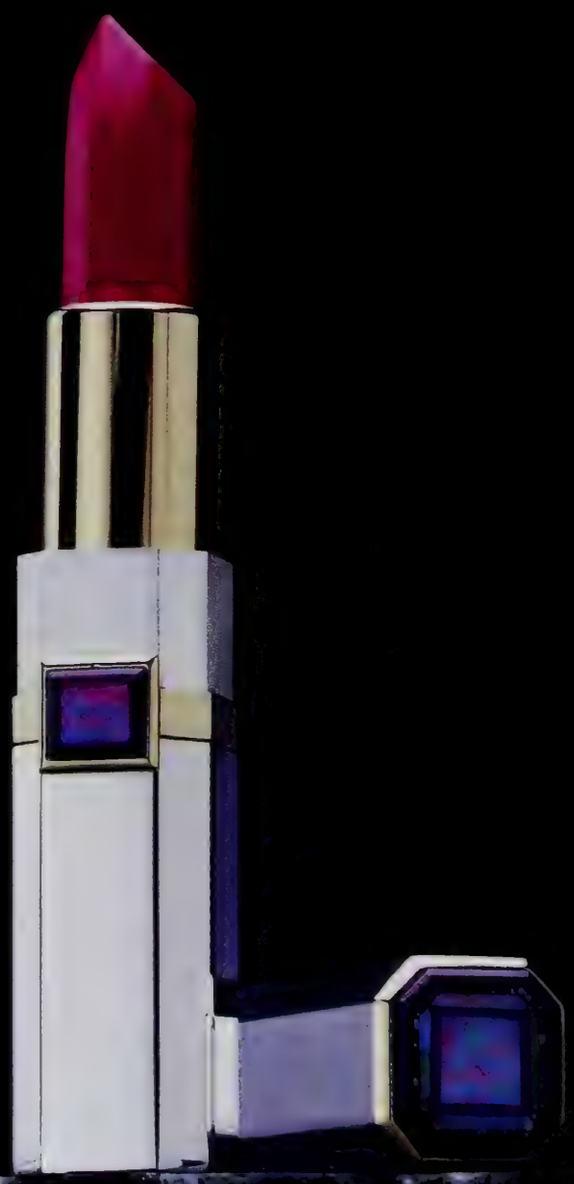

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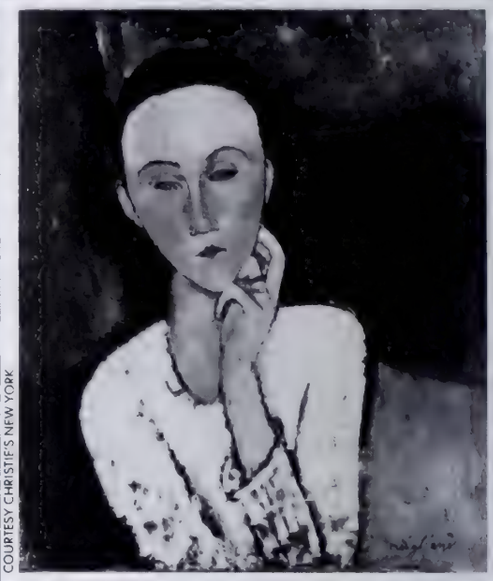

COURTESY CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK

Modigliani's *Lunia Czechowska* (1918).

sold last spring for $10 million), which is expected to sell for $8 million to $10 million. Manet's *Portrait of Alice Legouvre* (1875; estimated at $1.4 million to $1.8 million) is a beauty and as good a Manet as one is likely to find—if one could be found—on today's market. There are two Picassos, the pre-blue-period *Maternité* (1901) and the portrait of the artist's son in a Pierrot costume (circa 1925); also a fine Cézanne from his Impressionist period, which definitely belongs in a museum collection. There are several Bonnards, as well as Sisley, Modigliani, Fantin-Latour, Soutine, and Vuillard, the drawing for Gauguin's *Yellow Christ*, and the series of twelve exquisite watercolors for *La Dame aux Camélias* by Marie Laurencin.

One painting of the Goetzes' that is not for sale is van Gogh's *Self-Portrait by Candlelight*, whose authenticity has been in dispute for some time (rumor has it that it had been owned by Gauguin and "improved" by him). It was hung in a room of

THE MANET IS AS GOOD AS ONE IS LIKELY TO FIND.

its own in the Goetzes' Holmby Hills residence, and whatever its merits as an authentic van Gogh, it became Hollywood lore.

While at Universal–International, Mr. Goetz bought the film rights to Irving Stone's novel *Lust for Life*, which he came to consider unfilmable. When finally it was made, Mr. Goetz told the film's producer, Dore Schary, "You're bound to have a box-office smash. Everyone who owns a van Gogh will come to see it."

—*Stuart Greenspan*

NDULGENT THE SENSE OF REMY.

THE FIREBRAND DIRECTOR CHRISTOPHER ALDEN IS SHAKING OPERA TO ITS CORE

BY JAN STUART

Christopher Alden is staring peevishly at the set of his Long Beach Opera production of Monteverdi's *The Return of Ulysses*. Smoke is rising in heaps from one of the footlights, reinforcing his feeling that something is not right. The show is to open in two nights, and his face is covered by a poker player's two A.M. grizzle. He scans a miniature Greek temple on a grassy mound upstage and then inspects the stage floor, covered by a green-and-black grid, which the wife of one of the opera-board members says reminds her of kitchen linoleum. "I hate that green," Alden announces finally. "It looks like Easter."

He has decided that the entire floor should be done over in black, and, in his characteristically democratic manner, he canvasses everyone in earshot for their opinions—the set designer, the lighting designer, the stage manager—turning finally to a visiting journalist. The company's general director, Michael Milenski, perhaps with an imminent opening on his mind and a surplus of green paint in the basement, manages to convince Alden that the green gives a sense of the ocean. A compromise is struck, and a blackish green is settled upon.

"It's always a cliff-hanger," says the designer of his *Ulysses*, Paul Steinberg. Milenski shrugs off the eleventh-hour decision, conceding, "Chris does things on the spot, so you can never have a complete technical rehearsal with him." If Milenski appears to be laid-back about a chaotic working style, he knows that Alden's iconoclastic approach has saved the Long Beach Opera from being just another stage for opera war-horses and stamped it as one of the country's most adventurous companies. Waiving the standard [illegible] Alden has promoted rediscovery

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOSEF ASTOR

IS ALDEN "THE CALVIN KLEIN OF THE OPERA WORLD"?

ments of such works as *Death in Venice*, *The Coronation of Poppea*, and the rarely produced original version of *Ariadne auf Naxos* in aggressively theatrical, intensely choreographed productions that discourage fence-sitting. On opening nights, you could set your watch by the walk-out traffic. He stirs audiences from their naps and critics into paroxysms of huffing and puffing. The estimable Jonathan Miller, no wimp when it comes to making strong operatic statements, has dubbed Alden the Calvin Klein of the opera world.

Trendy provocateur or tomorrow's hope? A cursory tour of Alden images might suggest the former. In *Poppea*, Octavia is a druggy Joan Crawford type who shoots up between board meetings and sings her "Addio, Roma" in a straitjacket. In the relatively benign *Ulysses*, Ulysses is a crippled Vietnam vet, and Penelope's suitors are hollow-eyed creatures out of *Night of the Living Dead*. In *Ariadne*, Strauss's nouveau riche milieu is a lime green kitsch palace modeled after California's Madonna Inn, and the punk rocker Zerbinetta does her aria as a striptease. The implied West Coast decadence was so clear that an abashed L.A. *Herald Examiner* headline read, "Long Beach Opera Assaults Audience."

"It's true. That was the point," says the elfin-framed Alden, whose revisionist stagings have also appeared at the Santa Fe, San Francisco, and Basel opera companies, at the Houston Grand Opera, and with the London Sinfonietta. "Opera is a terrifying thing, and most directors think in terms of controlling the chaos, delivering something that will be lovely, lush, and ultimately comforting. I'm trying to release the chaos by taking their workings apart and putting them back together in a way that isn't tidy or respectable but that exposes the inner workings in a messier or more troubling way."

Alden will not let his audiences distance themselves from the deep emotional issues that seethe at the heart of opera—sex, passion, death. "People have to see beyond the period trappings to that emotional core," he says. "If it were done in its period, they would not see a hideous bloated take on parvenu culture but rather some beautiful thing. I just don't think an audience can look at people in a court costume from the seventeenth century and understand what kind of people these are. Whereas if you put characters in two kinds of suits from our era, an audience will immediately get the shorthand just from the cut of the lapels and make tremendous leaps in understanding. They are forced to confront it as being about people going through a human experience that is the same as theirs."

Alden's deliberate colliding of the classical and the ultramodern often draws

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comparisons to another upstart, Peter Sellars, whose work he respects and enjoys. The opera impresario Matthew Epstein sees an irony in this, commenting, "Christopher has been doing for ten or fifteen years the work Sellars has done for the last five years."

Alden is quick to point out the difference between Sellars's focus on a single period and his own, seemingly random use of different periods within one production, which is often derided by unsympathetic critics as anachronistic. Paul Steinberg, a veteran designer for fifteen Alden productions, locates Alden's technique in the postmodern conception of "using images of all times and places to create a new vocabulary so people can understand more clearly and are not smothered by a period vision. It's a much more complicated process, like a three-dimensional tic-tac-toe, because it says the whole history of mankind is at your disposal. So you have a responsibility to find true archetypes."

"LONG BEACH OPERA ASSAULTS AUDIENCE."
– L.A. *HERALD EXAMINER*

Alden cultivates his technique at an informal school he created with the director Eric Fraad, New York's Opera at the Academy. There, he and Fraad train new singers to locate the darker, hidden sides of their characters and to be open to an intensely physicalized performance style, which often has singers moving nonstop in the course of a single aria. New Yorkers got to see a prime example of the method this past August when Alden directed one of his Academy disciples, Angelina Réaux, in a staged evening of Kurt Weill songs at the Public Theater, *Stranger Here Myself*. Réaux was even more mindful of the composer's intentions than Lotte Lenya was. She reinvigorated such familiar Weill Weltschmerz as "Surabaya Johnny" and "Moon of Alabama," writhing suggestively atop a suitcase or reclining horizontally on a hotel bed in visceral, fiercely acted-out interpretations that ached with spent carnality and squeezed the last drops of longing and loneliness from the lyrics.

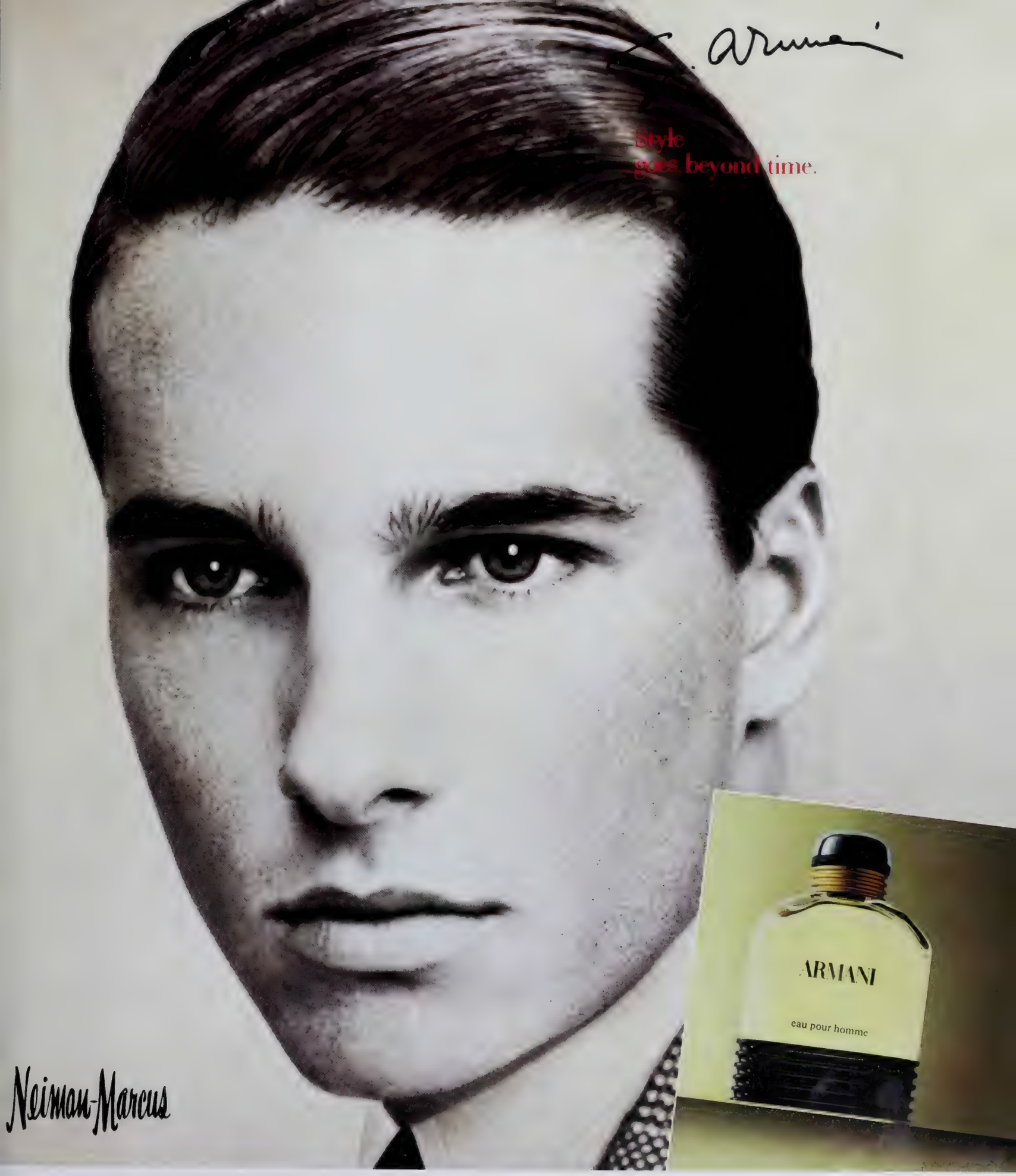
Alden pushes students and audiences to the limits of their inhibitions in workshops that often spill over into full-blown performances, like an environmental production of *Tales of Hoffmann* that moved audiences around several floors. Perhaps the grubbiest Academy experiments happen when Alden throws his singers into the hubbub of trendy New York clubs like M.K., where he stages what he calls "performance events"—a mélange of opera, rock music, performance art, and sheer chutzpa. In one, a group of singers planted among the crowd started a loud verbal fight across the tables, which the clubgoers thought was real until a synthesizer cut into their scuffle and they launched into the quartet from *Rigoletto*.

Ulysses as Vietnam vet in *The Return of Ulysses*.

Alden detractors, like the anti-Sellars factions, claim that the integrity of the music is sacrificed amid a carnival of postmodernist images. One need only have heard Angelina Réaux's recent note-for-note interpretations of Kurt Weill, however, to appreciate Alden's reverence for, and sophistication about, the written score. Alden considers himself an opera director first and foremost, unlike such avant-garde theater conceptualists currently dabbling in opera as Robert Wilson, Giorgio Strehler, and Patrice Chéreau.

"There are some opera directors who give you the feeling that they wish opera were not set to music," says Nicholas McGegan, the music director of the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra and Alden's conductor for *Poppea* and *Ulysses*. "For Chris, music and opera are on equal footing. At the beginning of rehearsals he works with me and the singers on the translations, to keep them faithful to the composer's intention and to find the vowels and consonants that are most singable. The musical and aesthetic and philosophical values are *never* compromised." The Los Angeles *Herald Examiner* music critic Alan Rich underscored McGegan's claims in his review of *The Return of Ulysses*, saying, "Monteverdi would have had a ball. . . . [The performers] sing out grandly, with a vocal splendor that invests Monteverdi's long, sinuous lines with accents of human emotion that does, indeed, transcend matters of oldness or newness in this music."

While Alden has had his share of violin lessons, he considers his musical training to be less a formal one than a by-product of nature and nurture. Alden is a classic Broadway baby, the son of the playwright Jerome Alden (who wrote last year's musical about the Roosevelts *Teddy and Alice*) and the dancer Barbara Gaye, who was in the original chorus of *Annie Get Your Gun* when she became pregnant with Christopher and his twin brother, David. The Aldens took their sons to see "everything"; and after a basic training in musical comedy, Christopher became intrigued by opera, finding in it "the most intense and theatrical and pushed" form of theater. "It was like a refuge," he says, "a refuge from naturalistic theater and from



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having to deal with the more mundane aspects of life."

Once out of the University of Pennsylvania, he followed his parents' Broadway path, landing a role in the chorus of the New York Shakespeare Festival rock-musical version of *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. (An adept singer himself, Alden took over for an ailing suitor in *Ulysses* one evening.) After bouncing between theater jobs for three years and assisting several directors, he entered into a pivotal period, apprenticing with the late, controversial Jean-Pierre Ponnelle in Europe. "I learned from Ponnelle to think of operas as dreams, which frees you from the constraints of having to make literal connections. A piece like *Ulysses* is very fragmented and oddly uncompelling, but it speaks on a strong subconscious level, and if you are not blocked by making these elements logical you can really start cooking."

"OPERA IS A TERRIFYING THING," SAYS ALDEN.

It is almost impossible to mention Christopher in any context without his brother's name surfacing. Chris and David Alden are a lab study in identical-twin behavior, more remarkable for their simultaneous rise as directors of revisionist opera than for their carbon-copy features. (David, whose work is seen more often in Europe than Christopher's, directed the American premiere of Karol Szymanowski's *King Roger* at Long Beach this year and is staging Alban Berg's *Wozzeck* at the Los Angeles Music Center Opera next month.)

While the brothers Alden are both bent on upending operatic conventions, close observers like Milenski and Epstein detect essential differences in their productions. "Christopher's work is slightly more lyrical," explains Epstein. "He was a painter as a kid, so there is a certain physical balance and a more developed visual sense." Milenski notes, "Chris has tremendous wit and he works to control the picture onstage. He will show the singer exactly what he wants, and it's up to him to internalize it, whereas David will work with the singers to help them pull out what they already have." The very act of comparing them is fraught with perils: it joins at the hip two very independent artists. "Whenever one of them has trouble, it reflects on both of them," says Epstein. "It's a cross they are going to have to bear."

When Michael Milenski asked Christopher Alden to direct his first Long Beach production, *La Bohème*, in 1983, the company had been coasting for three years on traditional stagings from the Verdi-Puccini menu, calculated to build an audience base in a conservative oil town. "It was very boring," wrote the music critic Martin Bernheimer of those early Long Beach years. Alden had to contend with a set rented from the Miami Opera, but he still managed to bring to the performances a psychological verity that persuaded Milenski to give him carte blanche with an entirely new production of Britten's *Death in Venice* the following season. Alden's choices immediately set the tone for his Long Beach work to come: he eschewed what he called "the usual impressionistic watercolory Venice" in favor of "a black marble sarcophagus death space," in which the protagonist, torn by his feeling of love for a young boy, engages in a psychic struggle with the gods Apollo and Dionysus.

Punk-rock prisoners of sex in *Ariadne auf Naxos*.

Once the Long Beach committed itself to a new philosophy of small-scale opera theater, Alden's budding dramatic approach was able to emerge in full flower. The choice of repertoire made the Long Beach board nervous, but the resounding successes of such productions as *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, and *The Coronation of Poppea*, which would later be produced in Washington, D.C., validated Melinski's confidence in both the opera and his director. "It showed us there was an audience willing to be challenged by new repertoire."

Both East and West Coast audiences will have a chance to judge for themselves this fall as Alden's new production of Offenbach's *La Vie Parisienne* moves from its October premiere, in Los Angeles, to a November run at New York's Opera at the Academy. Vintage Alden, the production exploits his firsthand knowledge of the flashy New York club scene to depict Offenbach's Parisian bohemia. Alden explains: "It's like a Shakespeare romance where people go into the woods, this green world, to get in touch with their subconscious, only here they come to Paris to get in touch with this deeper, inner world."

Alden's inner world penetrates every gesture and image in his productions, but a playful self-awareness keeps the director and his work from capsizing under the weight borne by tortured artists with a sense of mission. "I think I was probably a famous opera singer in a past life," he speculates. "There can't be any other explanation for being so involved in so arcane a medium. It's too absurd." □

Jan Stuart is the theater critic at 7 Days.

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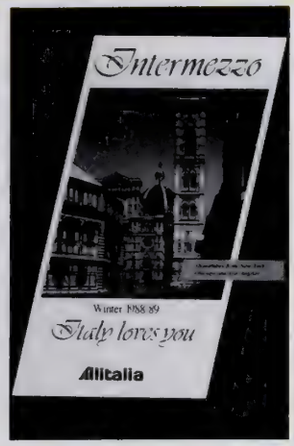

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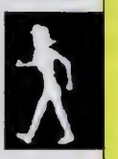

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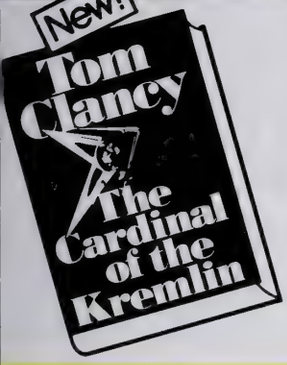

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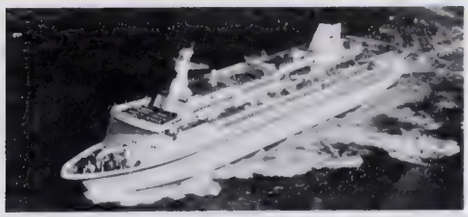

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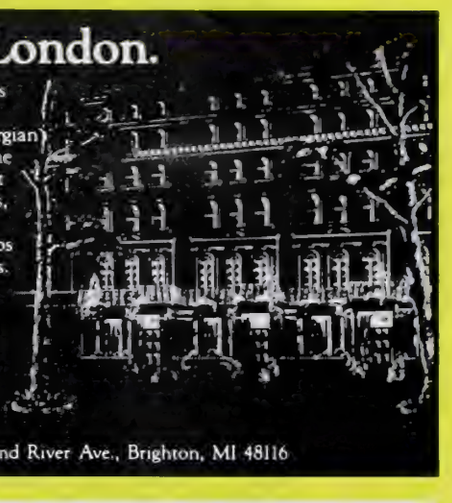

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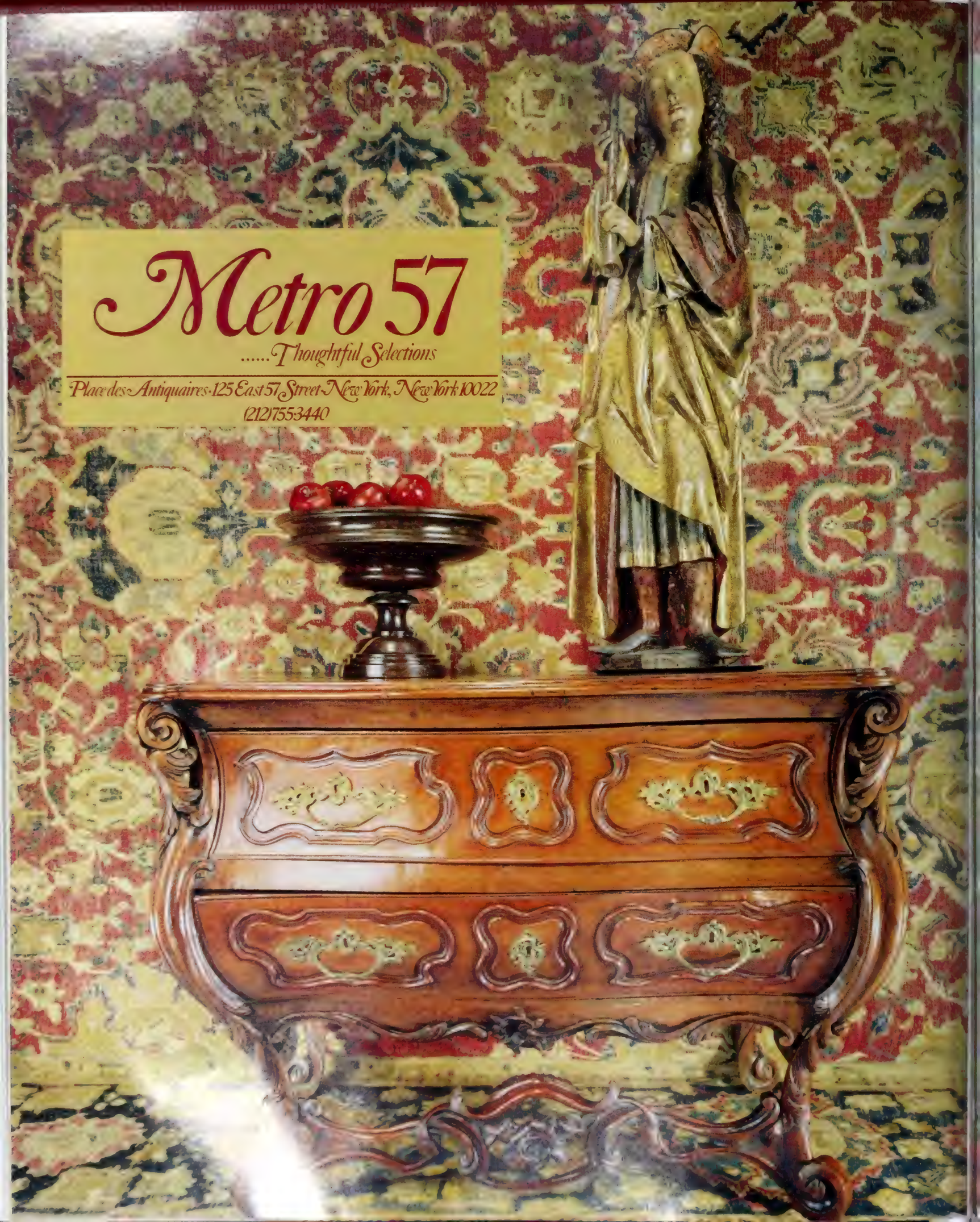
(detail above)

Delacroix's depictions of these five Great Cathedrals embody his reverence for the simple life, the quiet and dignified existence. Each is enveloped in an atmosphere as individual as the subjects themselves.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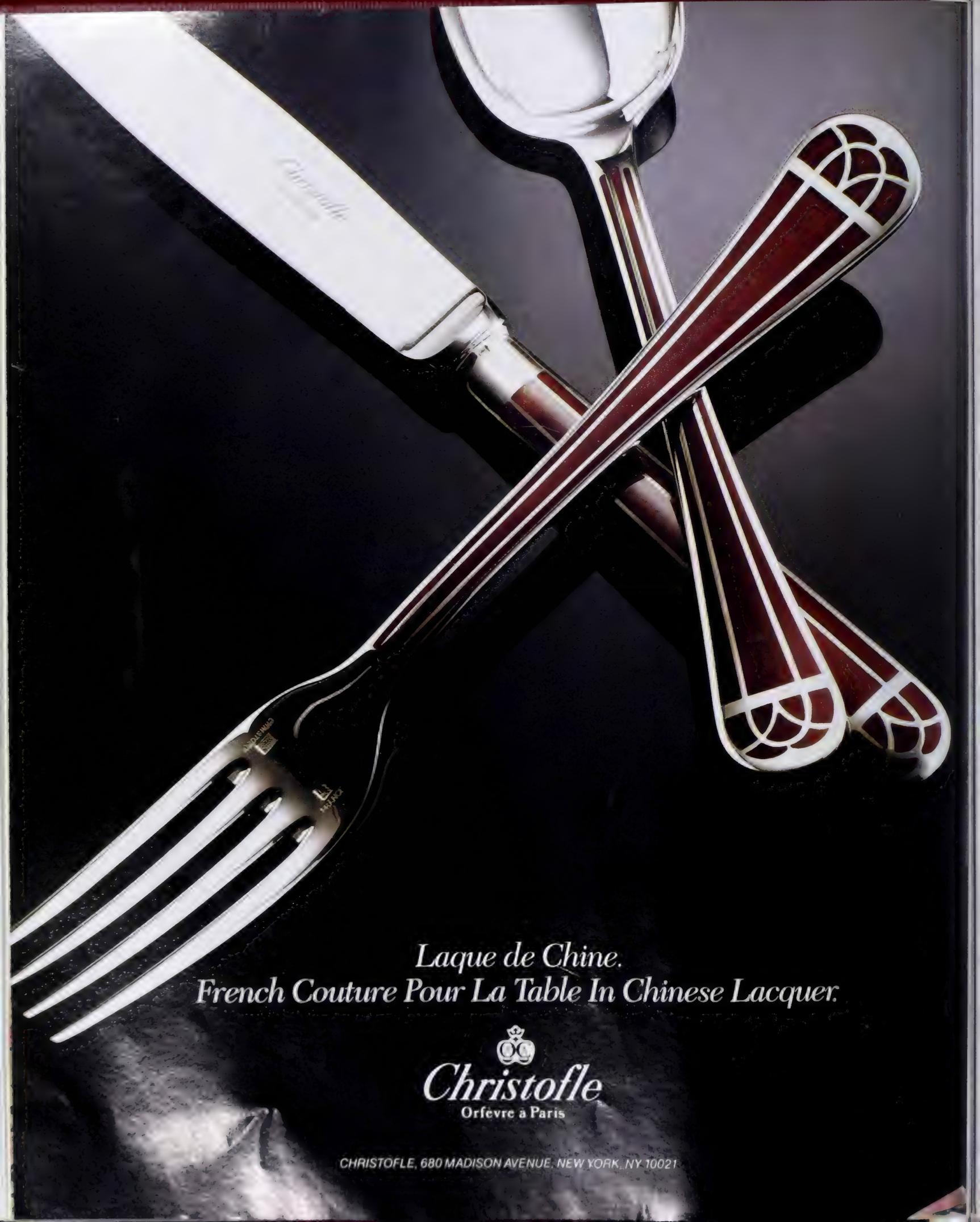
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PRIDE OF BARCELONA

Catalan cuisine goes baroque

BY PENELOPE CASAS

Above: A food shop next to La Boquería. Right: At Eldorado Petit, *ensalada de bacalao*—salt cod, *mâche*, beans, red pepper, and elvers.

Four years hence, in 1992, Barcelona will be in its glory. Host of the next Summer Olympics, it will also participate in Spain's celebration of the first voyage of Christopher Columbus to the New World. At this moment the city is in the throes of preparation for these great festivities: the old is being rehabilitated, the new burnished. In 1992, however, no one who simply wants to enjoy the city for its traditional charms — among them an abundance of fascinating restaurants—would choose to make a visit. The time to go is now, while Barcelona can still be savored at leisure.

With one of the greatest markets of the world, La Boquería, Barcelona has always been a glorious place for eating. Today, a love for produce of high quality that approaches reverence is at an all-time high, and in a burst of energy and flamboyant creativity the Barcelona restaurant scene has been turned upside down. New

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LISA LIMER

In La Boquería, one of the great food markets of the world, the best of everything fresh and edible is for sale, including plump, free-range chickens.

cuisine, ranging from the subdued and sophisticated to the outrageous, is revolutionizing eating. The wonderful cooking of Grandmother is no longer on many menus, while in the most deluxe restaurants an entirely new style based, as it always has been, on exquisite produce has taken cooking far afield from the familiar Catalan cuisine.

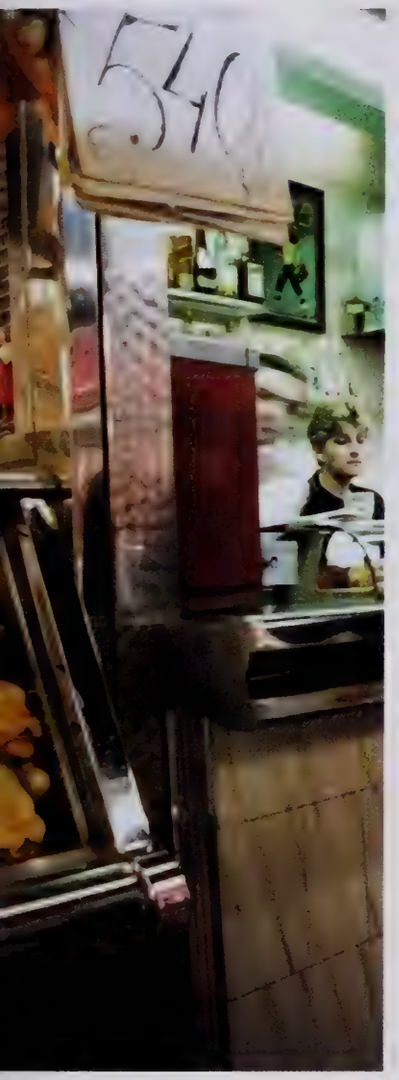
As Catalan chefs build a wholly new structure on their solid culinary foundations, triumphs and tragedies occur along the way. Some extraordinary new dishes are created and occasionally a disastrous one, but there is no doubt that gastronomy in Barcelona is alive, in high spirits, and ready to surprise you: Roquefort cheese ice cream bathed in raspberry purée? Smoked fettuccine? Barcelona will try just about anything.

Yes, there are regrets among Barcelonans that traditional Catalan cuisine, which has always joined the most unlikely and disparate ingredients, seems to be fading. It is a brilliant one, all too little known to the rest of the world. Movements are under way to bring back the cooking of the past, but for now the public seeks what is new and exciting, and smart restaurateurs are rising to the occasion.

Happily, however, many fine restaurants in Barcelona remain loyal to their Catalan roots, as do many more outside the city, where "in" and "trendy" matter far less. And Catalan food is, of course, still what you will find in family kitchens throughout Catalonia.

Catalonia, often called the cradle of Spanish cuisine, has a rich gastronomic history. One of the earliest European cookbooks, the *Llibre del Coch,* was first published in the Catalan language in 1520 and later translated into Castilian. Its author, Ruberto de Nola, was chef to King Ferdinand of Naples, whose territory was at that time one of Spain's possessions in Italy. His recipes display many of the ingredients and combinations that later became characteristic of Catalan cooking, such as the use of honey, fruits, and almonds in main-course dishes.

Dried cod with honey, sweet sausage (*botifarra dolça*), goose with pears, chicken with figs, pork with chestnuts, and rabbit with quince and honey all trace their origins to medieval cuisine. Ingredients from the New World—peppers, tomatoes, chocolate, potatoes—expanded the Catalan repertoire considerably, making possible such dishes as *escalivada* (a medley of grilled peppers, tomato, eggplant, and onion), chicken with lobster (with chocolate in the sauce), and *zarzuela,* a mixed-seafood dish in a tomato-based sauce. Of the five sauces that dominate Catalan cuisine, three use tomatoes and/or peppers from the New World: *sofregit* (a sauté of onion, garlic, parsley, and tomato); *samfaina* (a mixture of onion, tomato, peppers, zucchini, and eggplant); and *romesco* (a paste of dried sweet red pepper, garlic, and almonds). Of the other two, *allioli* (an oil-and-garlic emulsion) was well known in the Mediterranean, and the *picada* (a crushed mixture of garlic, parlsey, almonds, hazelnuts,



and pine nuts) was already standard in Ruberto de Nola's cookbook.

Add to this list other Catalan standbys like *empedrat* (a codfish-and-bean salad), *escudella* (an elaborate boiled dinner of meats, vegetables, and chickpeas), fresh lima beans with rosemary, mint, and *botifarra,* rabbit with *cigalas* (a small Mediterranean lobster), and chicken with lobster, and it is clear that Catalan cuisine's imaginative, almost baroque style is really more nouvelle than nouvelle itself.

Toward the rear of La Boquería the country people do their buying and selling, but not for them Roquefort cheese in ice cream bathed with raspberry puree.

The current craze for Italian cooking in Barcelona—there are pasta shops all over the city—is not new either. In the sixteenth century Barcelona was the most important Spanish port on the Mediterranean, the center of communications between Spain and the Spanish kingdoms in Italy. By the seventeenth century, Italian chefs were not uncommon in Barcelona. A typical dish, traditionally served for Sunday dinner, is *canalons*—pasta squares wrapped around a spinach or meat filling of pork, chicken, and liver and baked in a white sauce. Over the years this dish has acquired a distinctly Catalan flavor, as have the short, thin *fideos a la catalana,* cooked in casserole with Catalan *botifarra* and a nut *picada.*

Whatever the style of cooking, the ingredients available in Barcelona are extraordinarily impressive. Every chef or restaurant owner will immediately sing the praises of the 150-year-old La Boquería, where they all do their shopping every morning. "It is simply the best market in all of Spain," explains José María Llach, the chef of the staunchly classic Quo Vadis restaurant. It is, besides, one of the most beautiful in the world, admired for its artistic presentation of produce. After you have spent a day feasting your eyes at La Boquería, Barcelona's menus take on new significance, for all of them, nouvelle or traditional, are scrupulously seasonal, based on the best La Boquería has to offer that day.

As you approach the market, a bounty of green greets you at outdoor stands where produce from small local farms is sold. Inside, you are welcomed by the fruit and vegetable stands, a riot of brilliant colors. In early spring, white asparagus, tiny sweet green peppers, and morels are the stars. Morels appear on almost every menu in town, either in a white sauce or stuffed with cured ham and *botifarra.* Toward summer's end, there will be over a dozen varieties of wild mushrooms as well as fresh Spanish truffles. "Wild mushrooms have always been popular in the countryside," says Martí Forcada, owner of the restaurant Quo Vadis, "but it was not until my father intro-

These handsome young pigs have been sacrificed for some such delicacy as pork and chestnuts, *canalons,* or *botifarra.*

duced them, in the seventies, that they became an indispensable ingredient of Barcelona cuisine."

Fish appear in astounding variety—hake, flounder, tuna, monkfish, porgy, and bass, of course, but delicious cuttlefish, *pulpitos* (thumb-size octopus), *navajas* (razor clams), *cigalas*, river crabs, *necora* crabs, and live snails as well. A small, shapeless blob called *espardenya*, a kind of jellyfish, when it is sautéed or fried has the texture of squid and the delicate flavor of lobster.

The chef at Quo Vadis, one of Barcelona's classic restaurants, pours a stew of peas (*guisantes*) into a *cazuela*.

Bacalao (*bacallà* in Catalan)—dried salt cod—has its very own section in La Boquería. "The best of the *bacalao*," explains Jorge Arilla, who sells it at his stand, "is the center fillet. Each cod produces only one of these, and naturally it is the most expensive cut." Proper desalting of cod is as important as the quality of the cod. It must be kept at the ideal temperature and removed from its soak at just the right moment, when it is no longer too salty yet not bland. "Even our skilled chefs rely on the experience of Jorge Arilla," says Martí Boscada. "We buy the cod when he judges it to be ready—*en su punto*."

A cold-cuts stand, presided over by the jovial [illegible], prominently displays [illegible] and garlic-scented *chorizo*, which, although not a Catalan specialty, is the most popular dried sausage in Spain. Catalonia has its own style of sausage, unlike those of any other region. "*Botifarra blanca*, a white, cooked sausage, is what we Catalans prefer," she explains. "It's served as an appetizer but also used extensively in Catalan cookery. Black *botifarra*, a kind of blood sausage, is an important element of our traditional *escudella* [stew]." A long, slender sausage called *fuet* and *salchichón de Vic*, both something like salami, are the dried sausages of choice; and recently cured duck *magret* from the Ampurdán region of Catalonia, where duck foie gras production has been highly successful, appears on all the most fashionable menus in town.

It is not surprising that the city where four of the most outrageous creative geniuses of this century—Picasso, Dalí, Miró, and Gaudí—developed their styles should have started playing outlandish and unexpected turns on traditional cooking. The results, to be tasted all over town, are rarely less than fascinating, testifying to Barcelona's fierce pride and dedication to the perfection of its cuisine.

Barcelona restaurants observe Spanish dining hours: about one to four P.M. for lunch (a full meal, with the same menu as dinner) and nine to eleven for dinner. Reservations are advisable. Many restaurants are closed holidays, Easter week, August, Saturday lunch, and all day Sunday. The only translations on menus are from Catalan to Spanish.

The fine wines of Catalonia are popular in Barcelona, especially the *cavas*—sparkling wines made by the champagne method—and table whites. As [illegible] rule, Riojas are highly [illegible] but Catalonia can offer some excellent red wines as well.

At La Boquería, a paradise of fresh fruit: grapes, nectarines, immense strawberries, b[illegible]

NEW-STYLE CUISINE

ELDORADO PETIT Dolors Monserda 51. Phone: 204 51 53. About $45. In an elegant mansion on a quiet street, Eldorado Petit is new to Barcelona, although it has existed for years in the village of San Feliú de Guixols, up the Costa Brava. With its creamy walls, curtains, and cloths, its bright Indian rugs and tall palms, it makes a perfect setting for an extensive and complex menu

The kitchen at Quo Vadis, where the menu has not changed for years.

oyas, mangoes, pineapples, lemons, ginger, melons, pears, plums, apples, and more.

featuring the ultimate in new cuisine, based in large part on traditional Catalan food. *Ensalada de bacalao,* for instance—paper-thin slices of salt cod, *mâche,* beans, julienne red pepper, and a spray of *angulas* (elvers)—is stunningly arranged on a black plate. *Canelones de cigalas,* a sublime variation on a Barcelona favorite, features three whole langoustines, their shelled tails wrapped in pasta and bathed in a delicate white sauce with wild mushrooms. Prawns baked under a mound of coarse salt, baby squid sautéed with garlic and parsley, a pasta paella (*rossejat de fideos*), and fresh goose liver with truffles and sherry vinegar give some idea of the ambitious menu devised by the owner, Luis Cruañas. A wonderfully creamy *helado de crema catalana,* a frozen version of the famous Catalan custard, is the perfect dessert.

FLORIAN Bertrand i Serra 20. Phone: 212 46 27. About $40. The chef, María Rosa Grau, has brought to this small, stylish restaurant some of her mother's favorite dishes and others she created. Add to this the Italian heritage of her husband, Javier García-Ruano, who manages the dining room. ("My Italian grandfather passed through Barcelona on his way to America and decided to stay.") The result is a lively menu, nouvelle and traditional, which has Italian overtones.

Florián looks like an elegant *masía*—a Catalan country house—with a dining room on two levels, stucco walls, and a beamed ceiling. It has a collection of old glass, and modern paintings and sculpture. Particularly enjoyable on one occasion was the gentle flavor of sliced, cured duck on a bed of paper-thin green tomato sprinkled with Parmesan shavings, a tepid salad of multicolored pasta with *langostinos* (prawns), perfectly cooked hake in a sea-urchin sauce, and a fish stew with rosemary, all served on colored plates whose colors complement each dish.

In the fall Florián celebrates a week of wild mushrooms, with up to eighteen varieties of mushrooms in different preparations. During bullfight season, April to October, the meat and variety meats of the fighting bulls form a special menu for those who can summon up the appetite for it.

AZULETE Via Augusta 281. Phone: 203 59 43. About $40. The air is electric at Azulete, a glass-enclosed garden enveloped by greenery and flowers, where a spirited and stylish young crowd gathers. The chef Victoria Roqué's familiarity with French and Chinese cuisine gives depth and breadth to her menu (sweet-sour shrimp with sesame, for example), but traditional Catalan dishes like stewed rabbit with *botifarra* and veal with wild mushrooms are served too. An appetizer could be a cold cream-of-spider-crab soup served in its shell—subtle despite this crustacean's assertive flavor—or the salad of sliced lobster and monkfish with fresh tomato sauce seasoned with thyme. A house specialty, *brazo de gitano de pasta y verduras,* named for a Spanish cake roll, is translated into vegetables and pasta. Desserts

Can Isidre, with only twelve tables, is favored by local celebrities.

Café Pinocchio, whose diminutive kitchen is renowned for fine cooking.

The stylish restaurant Florián, whose cuisine is nouvelle. During the season one can order eighteen kinds of wild mushrooms and the flesh of fighting bulls.

fashionably focus on sorbets and fruits—baked apple with honey ice cream or figs with honey and raspberry sauce.

JAUME DE PROVENÇA Provença 88. Phone: 230 00 29. About $35. Recently this large, modern restaurant has been the enfant terrible of new-style cooking, although it was earlier famous for the fine Catalan cooking of the owner Jaume Bargué's mother. The food was unimpressive a few years ago, but a firmer hand now seems to be at work in the kitchen.

For a sample of the cuisine, try the [illegible] menu of six courses [illegible] one [illegible] rine of [illegible] lasagna [illegible] salmon [illegible] let of duck with [illegible] corn. On the [illegible] menu is an excellent tart of candied squash and pine nuts.

CLASSIC CUISINE

VIA VENETO Ganduxer 10 and 12. Phone: 200 72 44. About $40. Open daily. The early-twentieth-century Catalan art deco style is perfectly preserved at Via Veneto: dark, carved woodwork, tufted black leather chairs and banquettes, large mirrors framed in silver swirls, plate-glass windows veiled by shirred curtains—elegant but never stuffy.

The menu is traditional with more than a passing nod to nouvelle. Nothing could be more classic than salt cod with raisins and pine nuts, and *suquet* of monkfish, seasoned [illegible] *picada;* or simpler and [illegible] delicious than charcoal [illegible] *salmonetes* (red mullet) [illegible] under young onion shoots. Raw unsmoked salmon in raspberry vinaigrette is very good; so is an irreproachable pâté of fresh duck liver. A tart of wild strawberries, prunes bathed in brandy, or a variety of homemade sherbets bring to a conclusion a pleasant and impeccably served meal.

QUO VADIS Carme 7. Phone: 317 74 47. About $35. There are always daily and seasonal specials at Quo Vadis, an intimate restaurant with paneled walls, but basically the successful and highly appealing menu has not been changed for years. After a complimentary pâté, the meal may proceed to a potpourri of wild mushrooms grilled with garlic and parsley, an *escarxada de bacallà* (delicious cod-and-bean salad), or tiny frog legs. There might follow perfectly grilled fillet of sole, excellent breaded baby lamb chops, roast quail, or the traditional partridge with cabbage. Afterward, for dessert, the *tocinillos de cielo,* a tiny, very rich flan, is superb.

RENO Tuset 27. Phone: 200 91 29. About $40. Open daily. Reno is *the* classic restaurant in Barcelona, comparable to the legendary Jockey in Madrid. Ingredients, service, and preparation are irreproachable, whether classic, Catalan, or recently created by the owner, Jose Juliá. The spacious dining room has a 1940s elegance and sedateness—perhaps démodé but all the more appealing for that. You can run the gamut from peasant Catalan dishes like *escudella i carn d'olla* and *fricando* (veal stew) to haute cuisine preparations—sole and smoked salmon in puff pastry—or such new cooking as salt cod with garlic *confit* or

More new-style cuisine at Eldorado Petit, in a quiet mansion. Try their sublime *canelones de cigalas* (below), pasta-wrapped langoustines in wild-mushroom sauce.

beef tenderloin with sweet-and-sour onions. A satisfying dessert is an excellent *crema catalana.* Reno is famous for its wine cellar.

CAN ISIDRE Les Flors 12. Phone: 241 11 39. About $30. Can Isidre, in old Barcelona, near the nightlife, is a favorite of local celebrities and theatergoers. It is intimate and tiny, with only twelve tables, and has the atmosphere of an old-fashioned parlor. Huge bouquets of artistically arranged seasonal flowers and an interesting collection of paintings dedicated to Montserrat and Isidre, who own the restaurant, are part of the charming decor.

The traditional menu features honest food of fine quality. The selection of seafood is good, ranging from marinated lobster and clams à la marinara to the more unusual "dates of the sea" (*dátiles de mar*), a flavorful mussel; grilled baby squid and cuttlefish; and *espardenyes*. Morels, with their typical Catalan stuffing of ham and *botifarra,* are on the menu. Partridge Alcántara style (a centuries-old recipe from the monastery of Alcántara, in western Spain), although not traditionally prepared, is extremely good, stewed with pimientos, bacon, onion, and peppercorns. Desserts are delicious, especially a mousse of yogurt in raspberry sauce.

CHICOA Aribau 71–73. Phone: 253 11 23. About $25. Chicoa, with its fireplace, brick walls, beams, and red-checked cloths, is a refuge from the excitement and palate shocks of nouvelle cuisine. Here is a superb selection of traditional Catalan dishes prepared perfectly. They make much of the so-called new cooking look tired.

Start with *pa amb tomàquet* (country bread rubbed with fresh tomato), or *calçotada* (grilled scallions with *romesco* sauce). After that, dishes as simple as grilled fresh fava beans with cured ham and *romesco* sauce, and refried pinto beans served with the delicious anchovies of the region, are memorable. So is the *suquet* (fish stew). The house specialty is dried cod prepared ten ways, each showing this often despised fish to be the sublime delicacy it can be but often is not. You can order the *bacalao* grilled with *romesco;* crispy oven-baked with beans; in a *samfaina* mix of tomato, peppers, eggplant, and zucchini; or with *langostino* and *allioli.* Desserts include a delicious caramelized baked apple filled with *crema catalana* and, exquisite in its simplicity, *mel i mató*—fresh, unsalted goat cheese served with honey and walnuts. □

Penelope Casas is the author of The Foods and Wines of Spain *and* Tapas: The Little Dishes of Spain.

UNREAL PEOPLE

Mozart's ideal interpreters

Of these players, the old cliché is true: the theater is their life. They work there; they live there; they have no other existence. They are the Salzburg Marionettes, an ensemble of truly Mozartean grace.

Their history began in the household of Anton Aicher, a sculptor and teacher, who put on puppet shows with his family for their private enjoyment. Seventy-five years ago, the Aichers showed their puppets in public for the first time. The show: *Bastien und Bastienne,* a charming trifle Mozart is thought to have tossed off for a garden party when he was twelve. Word spread quickly, not only in Salzburg. The Aichers, now under the artistic leadership of Anton's granddaughter Gretl Aicher, have been in the theater business ever since, and the marionettes' repertoire has grown vastly more ambitious.

After an absence of twelve years, the Salzburg Marionettes are now touring the United States for the seventeenth time. From their stock of a dozen productions, they have brought their Rossini (*The Barber of Seville*), their Tchaikovsky ballet (*The Nutcracker*), and one of their eight Mozarts: *The Magic Flute.*

At home in Salzburg, where the marionettes occupy their own jewel box of a theater, fans argue whether it is best to sit up close, so that one can watch the strings, or in back, where one cannot see the strings at all. It hardly matters. Watching the frolicking snowman, or the loopy ravens, or the garden of dancing flowers in *The Nutcracker,* one might suppose that the marionettes' range ran the short way from Victorian whimsy to the cheerful-hippopotamus volumes of Walt Disney's *Fantasia.* Creatures like these are toys at any distance. But where the drama requires, the little actors (a full-size marionette stands about two feet tall) gather to themselves the full emotional weight and presence of their characters. Wires or no wires, they seem self-driven. They are people. They are real.

As the German Romantic Heinrich von Kleist noted in his bewitching little essay "Concerning the Puppet Theater," puppets have this advantage over living performers: they never put on airs. Exquisitely accoutered, with exquisitely carved faces and hands, the Salzburg Marionettes dwell in a state of pure expression.

No one in the world is so well equipped to rescue *The Magic Flute* from the curse of the opera house, where singers are forever being undone by self-consciousness. Disbelieving their roles, they smirk or strut or mug or cringe or condescend. Their actions say: I am singing the music, but I am not here. Bright symbols turn to sawdust. For players whose lives are not wholly circumscribed by the theater—for anyone, in other words, with a heart that beats—the mix of fairy tale, heroics, mysticism, and clowning may be beyond reach. The puppets do not sing—their voices come from superbly chosen recordings—but they are liberated by their limitations. There is no trace of sawdust about them.

The Salzburg Marionettes' American tour began last month in Los Angeles, Pasadena, and Santa Barbara; major stops this month and next include Schenectady, New York City (Lincoln Center), Boston (Berklee Performance Center), Louisville, Nashville, Sarasota, Fort Myers, and Clearwater. □

By Matthew Gurewitsch Photograph by Antonin Kratochvil

Clash of symbols. From left: A guardian of mystic thresholds, princely lovers on trial, two children of nature, and the demonic Queen of the Night.

DAIMYO BLOCKBUSTER

Can Japan's warrior patrons outshine stately England's?

By Barbara Flanagan

EISEI BUNKO, TOKYO

Exuberance of inspiration married to strictness of form: a flowered fan by a nineteenth-century master.

Why is the East Building of the National Gallery of Art like the sound stage of a Hollywood studio? Because inside both those mighty beige hangars, people make the 100-minute spectacles we have come to adore. Museum folk or film folk, they build the scenery of faraway places—"prop" *faux* rooms with handsome exotica—and strike the sets while they still look new.

Lately, the biggest projects share literary themes as well. Epic films and epic exhibitions have foreign heroes, and the heroes are rich men who do good.

At the National Gallery, the do-gooding rich are the art patrons—without whose aid art history expires. "We're putting art in a broader cultural context," explains J. Carter Brown, the museum's director and a descendant of patrons. "It's the history of patronage on the part of a small segment of society," he says. "Art usually takes people to make it happen."

In 1985, the magnificent "Treasure Houses of Britain: Five Hundred Years of Private Patronage and Art Collecting" starred the landed nobles who stocked their country houses for the glory of England. Opening October 30, "Japan: The Shaping of Daimyo Culture 1185–1868" shows the Oriental landed gentry—subshoguns of the warrior set—outpatronizing their English counterparts by performing art as well as buying it. This time, they are not just patrons on parade but canny families vying for a competitive edge with portraits, screens, scrolls, teapots, plays, and poems. Here are historical patrons with dynasties to glorify, presented by multinational patrons with corporate personalities to hone. Just as the Ford Motor Company endowed the English, the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company has supported the Japanese.

Although we know it would be wrong to mix English apples with daimyo oranges, we also know that cavalcades of national treasures translate into bankable "blockbusters." "Treasure Houses," at its moment one of the costliest museum exhibitions of all time, created a formula that was all but irresistible: rally the sponsors, import half a millennium's worth of fragile treasures, ensconce these in period splendor, and then send them home after less than six months' exposure.

Irresistible, and—it might have seemed—impossible to reproduce. But once the houses were gone, we wanted them back. We like the dizzying sensations of being dwarfed by buildings, outclassed by royalty, and dazzled by extravagance and passing time. Seeing national treasures through the perspective of real people

PHOTOS OF ARTWORKS, COURTESY NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, WASHINGTON, D.C. CALLIGRAPHY BY SHUNKIN TAKAHASHI

Minamoto Yoritomo, the first shogun, portrayed in polychromed wood (anonymous; ca. 1300).

TOKYO NATIONAL MUSEUM, TOKYO

amassing wealth, we get a chance to exercise that giddy emotion of joyful reverence so hard to find in daily life—pure awe.

We also like to show our loyalty and drop our quarrels. The celebration of national treasures makes us forget our petty differences and jealousies; we cheer the art lovers whoever they are—kings, popes, barons, or samurai bosses—and feel richer for having visited the rich at close range. Lulled by the right combination of lavish show with the heady air of crowded galleries, we can almost believe that we have died and gone to someone else's heaven.

Carter Brown helps fan our escapist fantasies. In 1985, the director asked us to view the country house as a "vessel of civilization" and enjoy "the dreams of Elysium it continues to offer in the egalitarian twentieth century." Slightly more prosaically, he calls the Japanese show "an opportunity for total immersion in a foreign culture."

Before we troop through the East Building again, burning to spend all our awe and admiration in one place, let us adjust our expectations. How, in a word, is the new blockbuster going to stack up against its standard-setting predecessor? What changes have been rung on that irresistible formula? Here are some preliminary answers.

1. Patrons as people: who is better?

"The daimyos are even more intriguing than the country-house owners because they were practitioners as well as patrons, tough but also gentle," says Carter Brown.

Martin Collcutt explains, in a riveting catalog essay, how these ferocious warriors paused in rougher exploits not only to finance tea masters and playwrights but also to mix their own, private ritual tea

SENDAI CITY MUSEUM, MIYAGI PREFECTURE

From the 1600s, a robe at once severe and festive, embroidered with a golden family crest.

The daimyos' love of ornament appears even in their resplendent instruments of war.

and chant No verses at home. The show is really about the mighty inner struggle that kept the daimyos balancing their *bu* and their *bun*—rounding out their fierce warrior interests (*bu*) with softer artistic pursuits (*bun*). Lest we underestimate *bun*, Collcutt stresses that the daimyos "treated culture not merely as a personal vocation but as an extension and legitimation of their political and military power."

To Westerners uneasy with the idea of coexisting Eastern opposites, the image of these gung-ho aesthetes—fighting in antler-horned armor by day and then donning embroidered No robes at night—may seem farfetched. But as Brown reminds us, kind art and mean business have always supported each other: look at the Florentine condottieri who funded Renaissance art.

2. Size of the show: which is bigger?

The "Treasure Houses" record—over 800 works of art and decor from more than 200 mansions—remains unchallenged. "Daimyo" weighs in with about 500 works filling about one-half the space. But the Japanese objects have the added distinction of being among the most heavily treasured of the world's national treasures—owing to the notoriously strict custodianship of the Japanese government. Each comes with an official rating as well as with rules for its public appearances: most are permitted to surface for months at a time; others must rest after a few weeks of daylight. The gallery has garnered over 160 registered cultural properties ("national treasures," "important cultural properties," and "important art objects"), but not all will be on view at the same time. Some objects must "sleep" in storage while Japanese handlers slip in comparable objects as doubles. So, "Daimyo" is decidedly smaller. It has, however, the subtler, more civilized distinction of acting in more

KIYONORI KOMMA/PACIFIC PRESS SERVICE

Six live No performances complement the National Gallery's displays of paintings and artifacts.

complex, sometimes invisible ways.

Even the empty air between the objects takes on special importance. In Japan, where space is scarce, the national treasures are seen in crowded installations, without the spare placement they really deserve. When officials agreed to send the art, they asked for a luxury impossible at home: wide-open spacing, which enhances the works as silence does music.

3. Installation as architecture: who built more?

In 1985, Ford gave the gallery money enough to cover its new walls and simulate the old look of country houses. Staff designers staged a complete transformation of I. M. Pei's masterpiece by inserting seventeen traditional, Sheetrock rooms—Tudor, Palladian, Victorian, and so on—right into the East Building's famous wedges of space. The ceilings were shaped; the columns were marbleized; the walls were stenciled to echo the period interiors of paintings on display. Visitors who came ready to deplore the simulations left praising the light-handed evocations of history. The installers were real craftsmen.

When the designers prepared for the daimyos, they knew they wanted to transform the building again. After comparing the real Japan with Japan-style buildings at home, the staff resolved not to imitate but to display the exhibits in simple Plexiglas cases.

For that period flavor, the gallery will surround the visitor with real, working buildings built by Japanese carpenters: on the outdoor mall, a No stage, to be razed after a single torchlit performance; on the ground floor, an entire tea house specially made and shipped from Japan; inside the exhibition, a modified tea room, where tea masters will serve forty visitors per ritual, and another No stage for five more live performances.

4. The patrons of patrons: how much did they pay?

"We're talking about a series of advertising opportunities, not the old idea of philanthropy," explains Elizabeth Weil, the head of the National Gallery's Office of Corporate Relations. She finds a dozen sponsors per year and looks for new recruits who have never previously tried art to polish their image. "It's a kind of corporate identity program—a chance to associate yourselves with a quality institution and to get your name out there," she tells America's companies. At the exhibits, the corporate names appear discreetly, but they live on and on in larger, "campaign" uses: posters, magazines, bus shelters, and air-

With its stylized gilt antlers, this armor (ca. 1300) seems made for ritual combat.

KUSHIBIKI HACHIMANGŪ, AOMORI PREFECTURE, NATIONAL TREASURE

This ceramic vessel for pouring warm sake—just over six inches high—dates to the 1600s.

EISEI BUNKO, TOKYO

port transparencies. The exact amounts of the contributions are never revealed. A knowledgeable source estimates Ford's contribution to "Treasure Houses" at over $1 million. Reynolds can hardly be getting Japan's treasures for less.

And then there is diplomacy. When American and foreign sponsors link up, they create rare and powerful alliances. For "Daimyo," R. J. Reynolds is joined by *Yomiuri Shimbun* (a newspaper) and the Nomura Securities Co., the largest securities firm in the world. In Japan, Reynolds is noted for the hard sell of American cigarettes; in Washington, for its lobby to open up exports. In both markets, needless to say, Reynolds stands to gain from prestige by association.

It is all a long way from the contemplative satisfactions of *bun*, but Carter Brown sees no conflict. "Lots of people wonder if the funding cramps our style," he says. "It's just like power steering: it moves you along in the direction you want to go." □

Barbara Flanagan is the author of the forthcoming book Illusionism *(Viking), on art design and architecture.*

Kneading [illegible] placing the lid rest: three of the infinitely refined notes that contribute to the harmony of the classical tea ceremony.

PRIVATE TOUR: THE CURATOR PICKS HIS FAVORITES

ISHIKAWA PREFECTURAL MUSEUM OF ART, ISHIKAWA PREFECTURE (2)

Cat. 225. A transcendent box for writing utensils. Above: The inside; below: the lid.

At *Connoisseur*'s request, Yoshiaki Shimizu, a professor in Princeton University's Department of Art and Archaeology and the curator of "Japan: The Shaping of Daimyo Culture," has compiled a list of the ten most splendid exhibits of this exceptional show. Here, listed by catalog number and described in comments adapted with permission from the catalog, are his selections.

Cat. 1. *Minamoto Yoritomo.* (Hanging scroll; ink and color on silk. Kamakura period, first quarter of the thirteenth century.)

A courtier-like figure wearing tailed ceremonial headgear, carrying a ceremonial sword, and clad in starched formal silk attire is seated on a three-layered tatami (straw mat). Executed in the consummate pictorial technique of the courtly tradition, this painting is one of the earliest extant examples of formal secular portraiture. The sitter is traditionally identified as Minamoto Yoritomo (1147–1199), the first shogun, represented as a courtly official rather than as a mighty military chieftain.

Cat. 47. *Yishan Yining.* (Polychromed wood. Kamakura period, ca. 1317.)

Yishan Yining (1247–1317), known in Japan as Issan Kokushi (National Teacher), was an erudite priest of Chinese Rinzai Zen Buddhism who came to Japan in 1299 carrying a diplomatic letter from Emperor Chengzong of the Yüan dynasty of China. This statue, an excellent example of *chinsō* sculpture (portraits of Zen priests), is made of Japanese cypress. The eyes are of crystal.

Cat. 78. Kaikei (active ca. 1185–1223), *Amida Nyorai.* (Lacquer and gold leaf on wood. Kamakura period, 1201).

One of approximately forty extant works by Kaikei, this image of the Buddha is noted for its refinement and detailed idealization. Associated with a ritual that reenacts Amida Buddha's descent to Earth to take the soul of a dying devotee back to his Pure Land of bliss, it was probably dressed in a costume and placed on a wagon leading a procession of people masked to represent the heavenly host.

Cat. 96. Attributed to Sesshū Tōyō (1420–1506), *Flowers and Birds.* (Pair of six-fold screens; ink and color on paper. Muromachi period, ca. 1483.)

Sesshū Tōyō, a close observer of the style of bird-and-flower paintings in his contemporary China, was a pivotal figure in the development of Japanese ink painting. Among some two dozen sets of screens on similar subjects ascribed to him, these screens are the best in artistic quality and the earliest in date. In their lower registers, both emphasize the tactile forms of rocks, twisting branches, and the surface of a lake, offering a sharp contrast with the uncluttered spaces of the middle and far distance.

Cat. 160. *Tōsei gusoku armor.* (Iron, leather, lacquer, silk, paper, wood, gold leaf. Momoyama period, late sixteenth to early seventeenth century.)

This massive set of armor, complete with all its protective parts, was originally owned and worn by the powerful general Honda Tadakatsu. Attached to the sides of the distinctive helmet is a striking pair of antlers, large but lightweight, made of wood and layers of paper hardened with coats of black lacquer. The grimacing horned head at the front of the helmet, carved from wood, covered with black lacquer and gold-leafed, was a type of ornament popular in this and later periods.

Cat. 125. Kano Tan'yū (1602–1674), *Pine and Hawk.* (Set of four sliding doors; ink, color, and gold leaf on paper. Edo period, 1626.)

At the age of ten, accompanied by his father, the talented Tan'yū was granted an audience with the shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu. At fifteen, he was appointed painter-in-service to the Tokugawa shogunate in Edo. This set of sliding doors is from Kyoto's Nijō Castle. The commanding form of the pine tree and the hawk, symbol of fortitude and martial prowess, may be a pictorial expression of the new era of Japan under the shogunate and the daimyos.

Cat. 216. *Saddle.* (Lacquer on wood with shell. Heian period, late twelfth century.)

The arched pommel and cantle are of red oak, and the bars, for the seat, are of soft paulownia. The ends of the bars that join the pommel and cantle are exposed in front and back. The saddle is finished with black lacquer and ornamented with a design of oak branches and leaves. This saddle is Japanese style, to be distinguished from the earlier, Chinese style, in which the bar ends are concealed. It was actually used in battle.

Cat. 225. *Writing-utensil box.* (Lacquer, metal, and mother-of-pearl on wood. Edo period, seventeenth century.)

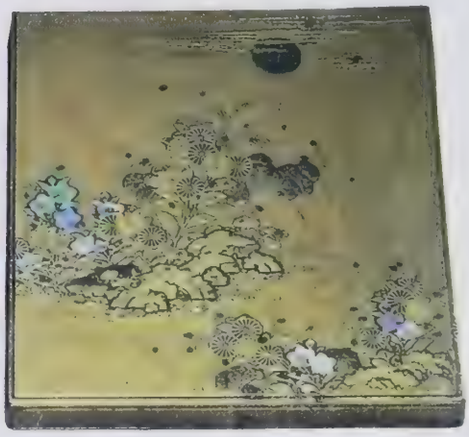
The decorative design—a field of grasses and chrysanthemums and other flowers—is executed in relief in *maki-e* lacquer, sheet metal, and inlaid mother-of-pearl. The ground is in a technique known as *ikakeji,* in which fine gold or silver filings are densely spread over wet lacquer.

Cat. 258. *Set of five dishes,* Nabeshima ware. (Edo period, late seventeenth to early eighteenth century.)

From around 1675, the official Nabeshima clan kiln of Ōkawachi produced porcelains of the highest technical quality, with refined, elegant designs, concentrating on a small repertoire of uniformly shaped tableware decorated with a palette limited to red, green, and yellow overglaze enamels, underglaze blue, and celadon green. Examinations of the Ōkawachi site have revealed an enormous kiln, measuring 137 meters in length and consisting of at least twenty-seven chambers, of which only the central three—offering optimal firing conditions—are thought to have been used for firing the official porcelains.

Cat. 292. *No costume: Karaori.* (Silk brocade. Edo period, eighteenth century.)

The *karaori,* an outer robe for female roles, is the most brilliantly ornate of No costumes. It exists in two types: *iroiri* (with red), for young female parts, and *ironashi* (without red), for middle-aged or elderly female parts. Both are typically worn full-length and with arms in the sleeves, though for certain roles the right sleeve is slipped off and draped back, or the robe is pulled up to the knees to reveal the undercostume. The designs in the fabric are all created in the weave, with long design threads of glossed or metallic leaf-wrapped silk "floated" across a ground of raw silk. This luxurious example, with its abundant use of red, is densely woven with gold thread and covered with butterflies dispersed over a field of wild carnations in threads of many colors.



A private house in Lima, Peru. Chic colors, playful forms by Arquitectonica, 1985.

Glamour, Inc.

Architecture with the Latino flash, by Arquitectonica

By Walter McQuade

During the 1980s the art of architecture has zigged and zagged, searching for a strong cultural compass. When something has seemed new, it often has turned out, on closer inspection, to be old. But when five young architects, four still in their twenties—infancy, in architecture—launched their practice in Miami eleven years ago, identifying themselves by a Latino name, Arquitectonica, they soon began to startle their fellow architects as well as the public. Arquitectonica is dedicated to romance, with a flash of audacious wit. Not only has this formula succeeded under the lucent moon on the semitropical Cuban coast of Florida, but the firm is now winning commissions in other glamour-hungry cities all over the country. Arquitectonica has opened branch offices in New York, Chicago, and San Francisco, has tried one in Houston, and has buildings that are either completed or under design for numerous other locations in fourteen states.

Of the five, the remaining partners, co-owners of Arquitectonica, are two talented, hard-working professionals, Bernardo Fort-Brescia and Laurinda Hope Spear, who are also husband and wife. He is becoming a legend for his exuberant pursuit of prospective clients as well as for his design work. Born in Lima, Peru, he has dark eyes, a short nose, a biggish chin, a clearly marked mouth. A lock of dark hair often dips over his right eye. He speaks five languages and can use them all effectively. She is tall, wide-shouldered, with long arms, long-fingered hands, light brown eyes, muted freckles, and a calm air. Besides buildings, she designs furniture, jewelry, and neckties.

Florida, especially Miami, seems an unlikely place in which to start a serious design movement, because it has such a mixed architectural history. After the glory days of Addison Mizner and his Castilian dreams, there came a mild flirtation in the created community of Miami Beach, across Biscayne Bay from Miami proper, with small art nouveau or art deco hotels. Many of these remain today, and some of them are being restored, but they are now thoroughly overshadowed by the resort convention hotels that were built in the fifties and sixties—anti-aesthetic monsters, whose exteriors are nothing but big and whose lobbies are architectural delicatessens.

Several miles to the north is a rather different environment, the conservative, close-in community of Miami Shores. Here decorous streets are lined with stuccoed mock-Mediterranean and southern-colonial houses, all of them single-family homes, with perfectly tended lawns. Miami Shores shuns Miami proper, a Cracker city until the 1960s and 1970s, which brought an influx of hundreds of thousands of Cubans fleeing Castro to try to make Miami a new Havana—or an old one. In more recent years, spurred by further immigration (mainly of Haitians, Salvadorans, and Nicaraguans), the city has grown to be the financial capital of the Caribbean, operated from sleekly conventional modern skyscrapers, glossed by the sunlight.

The house that Arquitectonica completed for Laurinda's father, a thoracic surgeon, back in 1978 in Miami Shores, fronting on Biscayne Bay, brought the firm its first fame. TV producers have used it, as a setting in "Miami Vice" and other shows, and so have fashion photographers. It is a classic modern home, beautifully worked out, and also a demonstration piece for the designers' visual wit. Entering the suburban-size lot, one walks through a geometrically planted thicket of black-olive trees to face a long, unrevealing wall of bright pink, with a red stoop leading up its side. Low in the wall is a small round window, which gleams greenly. But it is not a window; it is a porthole, and what one sees through it is the underwater of the Spears' swimming pool, elevated, on the other side of the wall, where Dr. Spear swims his laps.

The Spear house was followed a few years later by what still is the firm's best-known building, a twenty-story condominium in Miami, also overlooking Biscayne Bay, called the Atlantis. Atop its roof is an enormous abstract sculpture, painted red, and the building's flat torso has been sculpted as well. High on the façade, a large four-story chunk is punched out of the design, all the way through to the other side. In the midst of this emptiness sits a potted palm tree silhouetted against the sky, beside a whirlpool bath, with a spiral staircase, painted bright red, twisting upward. The walls of this opening are bright yellow, and one is rippled. It could be on a book jacket for an early collection of short stories by Noël Coward.

Arquitectonica began by accepting almost any type of commission that came along or could be ferreted out—jobs from pinch-penny speculative builders of housing, office space, and stores. "Sometimes these building types are considered very banal," says Bernardo, "but that doesn't mean an architect shouldn't address the problem." He and Laurinda try to make each building memorable to the public by giving it its own identity, sometimes by fantasy. They both have learned, as well, to keep costs down and to make changes during the design stage at clients' demand.

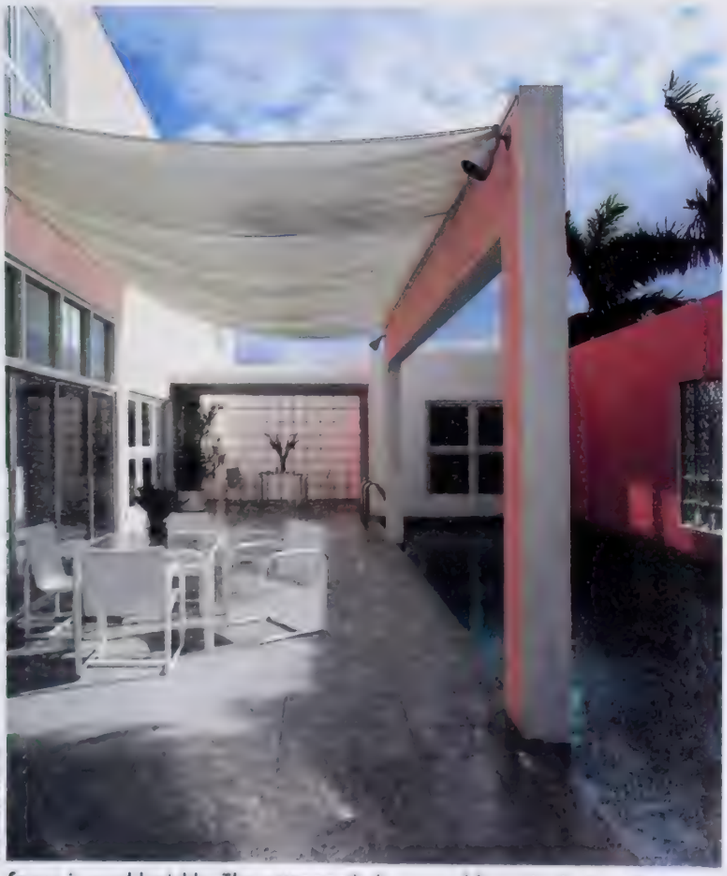
By now, however, their practice has grown and attracted the attention of national clients with better building budgets. Granite and marble are beginning to replace painted stucco. The firm has just completed a superbly functional courthouse for Dade County, with a sleek modern municipal character, dignified without being dull. Windows are tilted at odd angles; colors are strong; a drive-in is included for the paying of traffic fines. Also recently completed or under construction are a shopping mall in Atlanta, a substantial technical center for the state of Virginia near Dulles Airport, and, in Peru, a large and complicated bank–office building with big windows gazing out on the Andes mountains. In Peru also is a house that is a masterpiece of hand craftsmanship, and the firm recently completed two houses in Chicago.

All of Arquitectonica's five founding partners were Ivy League educated. Hervin Romney took architectural training at Yale, as did Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk. Fort-Brescia's background was cosmopolitan. Of French and Italian descent, he

ROBERT LAUTMAN (2)

From Biscayne Bay, the Spear house (1978) looks open yet disciplined.

From the land side, it seems mysterious despite the warm, inviting colors.



Space is used lavishly. The witty porthole, sensed here, looks into the pool

began his schooling in Lima, was sent to Switzerland and Germany for further schooling, and finished high school back in Peru. After graduating from Princeton, in 1973, magna cum laude, he proceeded to the Harvard Graduate School of Design. Laurinda, meanwhile, had graduated from Brown. She completed her graduate architecture work at Columbia and then took further classes at MIT. In 1978 she won the coveted Rome Prize, against countrywide competition. She and Bernardo first met in 1975 when she was at MIT and he was finishing at Harvard.

When he graduated, good jobs were scarce. "All my friends were going into big firms in Chicago and New York," he says. "How boring! So when I was offered a teaching job at the University of Miami by phone, I accepted. I thought this would be a great adventure; I'd teach, get a chance to catch up on reading, et cetera. I'd never been in the tropics; Lima is very cold. I didn't know then that Laurinda was from Miami."

Laurinda came home, eventually also teaching at the University of Miami, and six months later they were engaged.

In 1977 Arquitectonica—the name suggested by the Cuban-born Romney's wife—was incorporated in Florida. At thirty-six Romney was the only one of the principals who actually had an architecture license; the others were, in effect, working for him, while gaining the required experience before going for their own licenses. Equally important, he also had a commission to execute. One day in Miami he had been invited to the seaside villa of an Ecuadoran businessman who wanted to build a luxury condominium in his native country. "I put on my jacket and tie," says Romney, "and got there on time, ten-thirty A.M. Shortly, my potential client strolled in dressed in a robe, up from his morning swim. He wanted a drink, and we consumed a bottle of scotch while working out the deal."

Arquitectonica's first Miami headquarters were in Fort-Brescia's one-room apartment. The Spear-house commission and one in Philadelphia came in, and, through a competition, the office's first substantial condo on Biscayne Bay. The office moved into an unconverted garage, which was quickly converted the day before an important client from New York was to call. The next shift was to small quarters in Coconut Grove, and the firm now occupies a comfortable suite in Coral Gables.

Of the original partners who are no longer involved, Andres Duany and his wife, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, left in 1979 to set up their own practice. In 1984 Hervin Romney followed suit, carrying the Arquitectonica spirit forward, as is exemplified by one of his smaller jobs since, a vibrant remodeling for a Burger King fast-foodery in Miami Beach.

Nor does Fort-Brescia, who succeeded Romney in the firm's rotating presidency, turn down small jobs. The office can get as involved in designing sets for a dance troupe or interiors for Fred the Furrier in New York as in large city-planning projects.

Arquitectonica's staff now totals about seventy, including those in the out-of-town offices, and works under an arrangement that might be called a benign dictatorship. Although about 80 percent of the firm's projects are for more-distant localities, all are designed in Miami and are strongly controlled by Bernardo and Laurinda. The resulting work, while it may bear traces of Russian constructivism, as historians have pointed out, on the whole reflects influences that are surprisingly nonarchitectural. There is something of the orderly abstraction of Léger, the free-flowing lyricism of the late Matisse collages, and the burning colors of Miró. But so far it all has not really congealed into one style, and neither Bernardo nor Laurinda wants it to.

Bernardo says firmly, "We dislike the whole notion of style. Modern architecture is more an attitude than a style, the attitude of nonconformism. Not everything in architecture can be

The Spear house has been seen on "Miami Vice." View of the atrium.

PAUL WARCHOL/COURTESY ARCHITECTURAL RECORD

Peru's Banco de Credito looks out to the Andes, in to a courtyard.

A building: Banco de Credito.

HUBERT

Fort-Brescia and Spear in Coral Gables. She designed his necktie.

explained. The modern attitude recognizes the intuitive side of our profession. There are no rules."

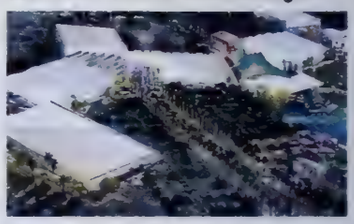
"To build a new building in an old style," he continues, "is to erase history, to cover up. The reference is always to, you know, a palace for the rich with lots of servants. People are in love with those times, identify with the nobility and being the masters. Those times and buildings were possible only through unbelievable exploitation of others. Those are not our times, and the symbolism in architecture recalling that era is not appropriate." He does not share the current preoccupation of architects with contextualism—fitting in with the background. "It is the nature of most American cities," he says, "to be historically diverse."

Says Laurinda, "The premise we go under is that of course we can make a building work functionally. That means that the only interest left is composition and design. We try to keep the architecture as pure art. We might as well be painters or sculptors." That might indicate a new direction for architects, or, then again, it might just point the way back to simpler times, when the best architects really were painters or sculptors. In either case, Arquitectonica is making the idea work right now. □

Walter McQuade is a contributing editor to Connoisseur.

Under way: a house near Chicago.

Just built: one on Lake Michigan.



Next: a Ft. Lauderdale mall.

Bold geometries and modula[illegible] will mark the Center for Innovative Technology, near Washington, D.C. Still, the design looks back to the Bauhaus.

In 1982, this vibrant condominium building in Miami made Arquitectonica famous.

THE SCHOLAR'S TREASURE

TIMOTHY GREENFIELD-SANDERS

BY MARK SINGER

The urge to pin a definitive label on Wang Chi-ch'ien—C.C. Wang, to his Western familiars—is more than some of his acquaintances can resist. The apartment building Wang lives in, for instance, an unprepossessing Manhattan high-rise in the comfortable east sixties, comes equipped with a young, red-haired elevator operator who is capable of exclaiming to even the most hopelessly Occidental of the pilgrims to arrive for a visit with the quiet, elderly gentleman in the ninth-floor-corner two-bedroom, "Don't tell me you're an important Chinese painter, too!" The view from the elevator, in other words, is "Mr. Wang paints important pictures."

Some of Wang's more widely traveled friends, meanwhile, explain that he is one of the last, perhaps *the* last, of the *literati*: a legitimate descendant of the orthodox traditional Chinese scholar-artist-connoisseur-poet lineage that has its origins in the Sung dynasty, eight hundred years ago, and its inspirational sources in the art of the [illegible] masters of the eighth century. These admirers are [illegible] Wang's richly developed and celebrated ink-and-color [illegible] aware that reposing within the [illegible] floor and within a bank vault some [illegible] privately owned collection of traditional [illegible] and where in the world—a

PHOTOS, DAVID HAMSLEY; PAINTINGS, COURTESY C.C. WANG FAMILY COLLECTION, NEW YORK

WHERE WILL C.C. WAN

collection C.C. Wang, at eighty-one, now believes could best be preserved intact inside a public museum, provided, of course, an angel materializes who is willing to pay C.C. Wang's price: $25 million, give or take.

Wang himself, painter and collector, when asked whether he is a true *literatus* or, perhaps, a more complicated twentieth-century hybrid, humbly says, "A title doesn't make me better. I don't pay attention to that."

"People think of C.C. as a very complex man. My feeling is that he's very straightforward and simple," says Arnold Chang, head of the Chinese-paintings department of Sotheby's and himself a painter and a student of Wang's. "Sometimes people's accounts of Mr. Wang tell you more about themselves than about him. My experience has been that C.C. is extremely generous with his knowledge and extremely good with young people who are interested in Chinese art. C.C.'s life reflects a lot of the basic

C. C. Wang unfolds the narrative of a twenty-two-foot hand scroll, *Procession of Taoist Immortals to Pay Homage to the King of Heaven* (detail, right), attributed to Wu Tsung-yüan (eleventh century). The restless rhythm of line propels the procession forward.

COMPARABLE COLLECTION END UP?

issues in Chinese society and in the art market at the moment. He's a bridge between old Confucian China and a Chinese person in the modern world. There are very few people who have spent half their lives in China and half in the West and have dealt with a very traditional field in a modern context. C.C. is a pivotal figure. Westerners tend to love to break things up into categories: the artist is the artist, the dealer is the dealer, the historian is the historian, the critic is the critic. In Chinese tradition it's not only customary to lump these functions together; it's advisable. I think one has to realize that the Chinese way of looking at paintings is fundamentally different from the Western way—that includes the business of it and also the basic approach to connoisseurship. So there's a lot of misunderstanding. When it comes to authentication and attribution, the Chinese take into account that certain questions might not lead to absolute answers. Westerners tend to believe it should be one way or another."

Correctly, Chang suggests that opinions of Wang vary. Some of these opinions ripple with innuendo. Carl Nagin, a journalist who is writing a book about the late Chang Ta-ch'ien, a gifted artist and a notorious forger who is regarded as the other great *literatus*-in-exile of the twentieth century, says, "Wang's a consultant to Sotheby's. If a Sung painting turns up there and C.C. says it's a fake, it's not going to be put up for sale." Wang happens also to be a steady customer of Sotheby's auctions, a fact I note in this context not to raise any moral quibble but, rather, to illustrate the endearingly murky nature of Chinese connoisseurship.

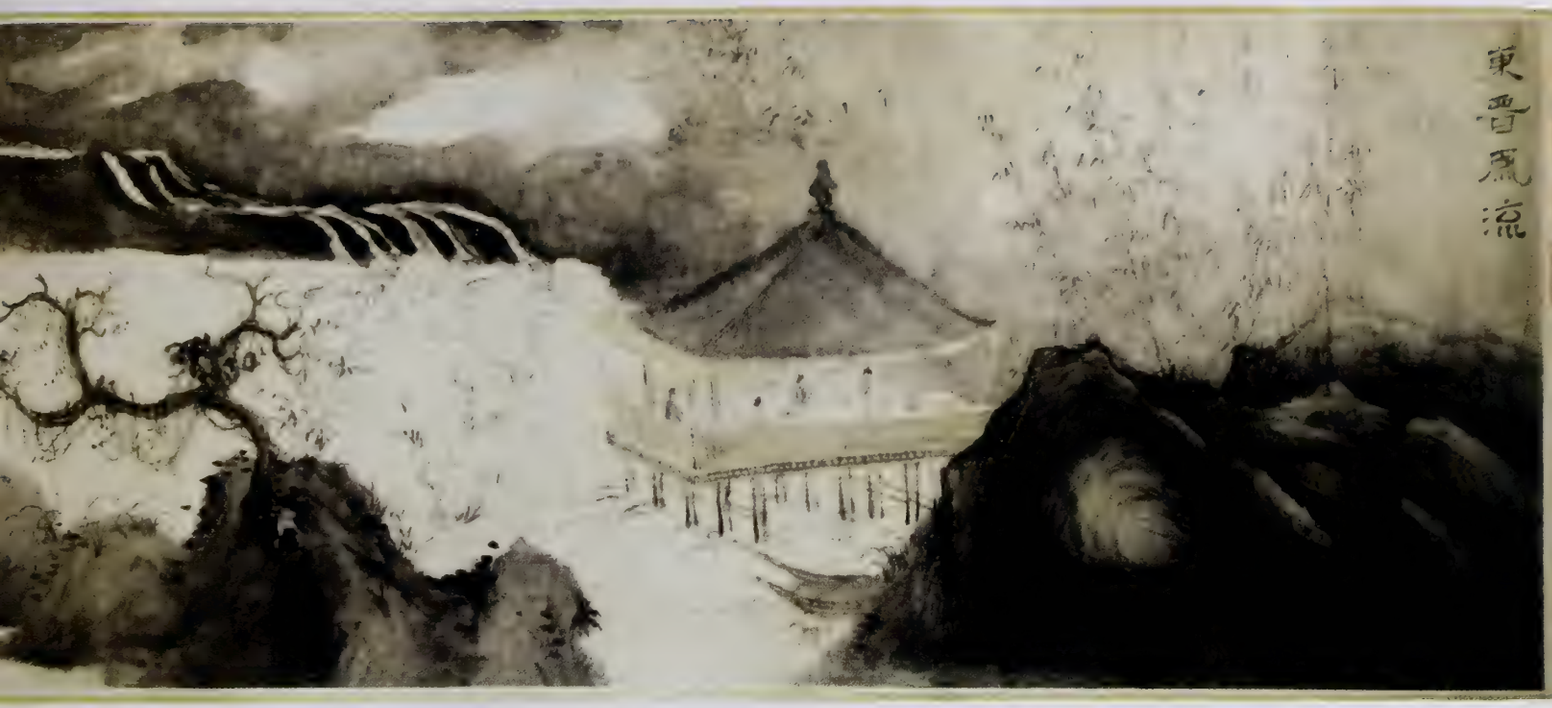
Perhaps the most important painting in Wang's collection—formerly in the collection of Chang Ta-ch'ien—is an exquisite landscape, *The Riverbank,* which Wang attributes to Tung Yüan, a tenth-century avatar. In *An Index of Early Chinese Painters and Paintings,* James Cahill, professor of art history at the University of California at Berkeley, lists the piece this way: "Man in a pavil-

ion overlooking a river; mountains beyond. Important early work? or modern fabrication?" This elegant fudge illustrates perfectly the hierarchies and vagaries of the game. Cahill, a longtime friend, calls Wang "the best source of traditional Chinese connoisseurship we have in this country." The tiny subuniverse that concerns itself with traditional Chinese painting is, according to one leading dealer in New York, "one of the smallest worlds there are," with, he notes, "the highest percentage of marvelously inflated egos, including my own. It has to do with whose eye is the best and whose guess is the best, because there are very few absolutes in the world of Chinese paintings."

A scarcity of absolutes notwithstanding, these abbreviated facts about C.C. Wang seem to be beyond dispute:

Born in 1907 to a well-fixed family that numbers among its direct lineal ancestors Wang Ao, a prime minister of China during the fifteenth century, Wang grows up in Suchou, a prosperous scholar-intellectual haven west of Shanghai. Receives a classical education, including calligraphy, and as a member of the cultural elite is expected to enter government service. At fourteen, while in middle school, begins to study traditional landscape painting and soon finds his way into the teaching studio of Ku Lin-shih, who, according to Jerome Silbergeld, author of *Mind Landscapes,* a study of Wang and his work, "owned what was regarded by some as China's second-finest private collection of ancient paintings. . . ." (Wang will come to own a few of Ku's landscapes but will lose them when he emigrates from China.)

In 1932, Wang moves from Suchou to Shanghai to attend law school and to study painting with Wu Hu-fan, whose work he has admired in a Suchou mounter's shop. As his own paintings start to sell, Wang proceeds to collect Ming and Ch'ing works. Through Wu Hu-fan, Wang pays regular visits to P'ang Yüan-chi, steward of what was "often called China's greatest private collection," and, in 1935–36, reaps an even more valuable dividend: employment as adviser to the London Exhibition Committee, helping to select works bound for an unprecedented showing at Burlington House. Spends three months examining every single scroll in Imperial Palace collection, particularly strong in pre-Ming masterpieces—art that no private citizen in China has ever laid eyes on. Also in 1936, wed Victoria Contag, wife of German consul in

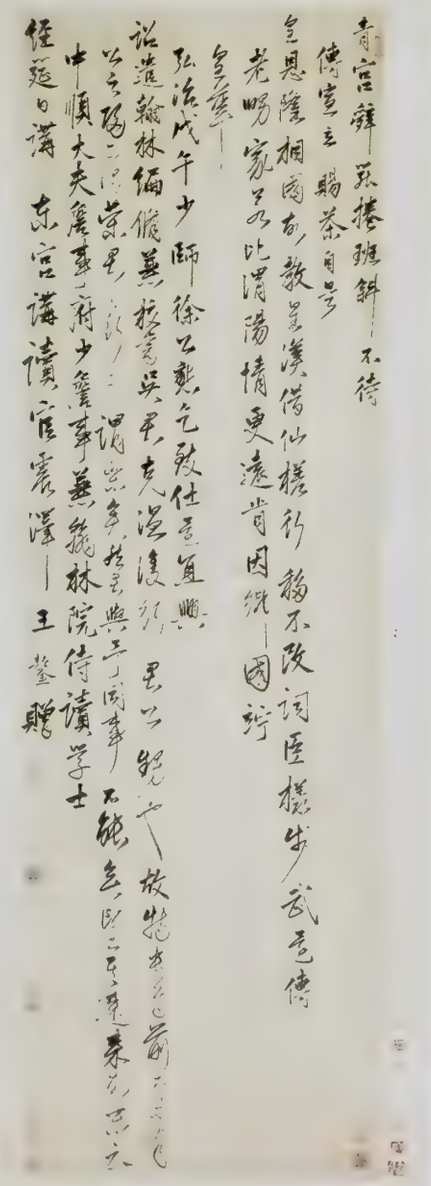


Shanghai, Wang initiates the project of photographing seals on paintings in Imperial Palace collection; during next several years traverses China, photographing seals of other private and (rare few) public collections. The seals project, Wang now says, was a ploy to enable him to see more paintings. A highly successful ploy: Wang has a reputation for having seen more Chinese paintings than anyone else alive. In 1940, Wang and Contag's catalog of 9,000 seals (mainly Ming and Ch'ing, plus some Sung and Yüan) is published in Chinese and German. Expanded and published in English in 1966, *Seals of Chinese Painters and Collectors of the Ming and Ch'ing Periods* remains a standard reference work.

In 1947, Wang travels in Japan and America, looking at Chinese art and modern Western art, and, while in New York, consults for Metropolitan Museum of Art on recently acquired (for $300,000) A. W. Bahr collection of Chinese paintings. Renders provocative judgment: only ten or fifteen of collection's 149 works are "of museum quality." Permanently immigrates to New York in 1949, along with wife and two younger daughters (another daughter and a son remain: daughter not able to leave China until thirteen years later; son gets stuck until 1980—eventualities that dispose Wang unfavorably toward Communist regime). Brings to America only a handful of paintings from collection, including one by Yüan master Ni Tsan and another thought to be by Ch'ing luminary Wang Hui, which Wang later realizes is a forgery. The bulk of paintings left behind, including Wang's own work, perishes, mainly by fire, during Cultural Revolution.

In New York, Wang sets out to rebuild collection from scratch, often buying from photographs, dealing with relatives and agents in Hong Kong. Benefits from bargain-basement days in the Forbidden City; acquires several scrolls spirited by court eunuchs from collection of Pu-i ("Last Emperor"). Temporarily earns living hand-painting wallpaper and lamps; also trades real estate; never stops painting or collecting. In 1956, becomes defendant in comic-operetta-like lawsuit. Plaintiff is German-born collector with whom Wang has swapped paintings. Judge, native New Yorker who is clearly baffled by rudiments of case (but somehow sees fit to crack Chinese-laundryman jokes from the bench), declares "caveat emptor" and rules in Wang's favor.

The original Ming *literati* poet-painters, who tended to moonlight as herbalists, fortune-tellers, and priests, somehow transcended concerns with mundane commerce. Wang, in 1973,



Above: The light-filled, shimmering *Romantic Spirit of the Eastern Chin* (1360), by the Taoist priest and painter Fang Ts'ung-i. Far left: Early Ch'ing hanging scroll, *Scene of the Yangtze River*, by Tao-chi; a calligraphic scroll by C. C. Wang's ancestor Wang Ao, entitled *Farewell Poem* (1498).

Perhaps the most important painting in Wang's collection: the majestic, seven-foot-high *Riverbank*, by the tenth-century avatar Tung Yüan. Left: *The Garden of Green Waters* (ca. 1370), by Ni Tsan, the minimalist painter who first called attention to his materials (ink, paper).

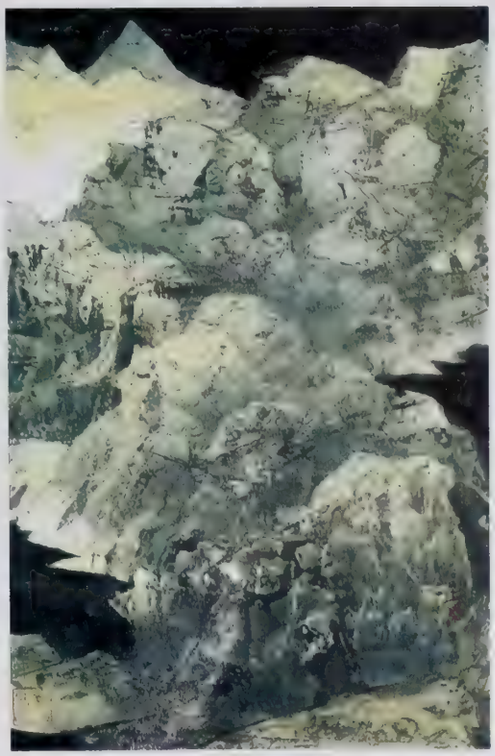
departing from orthodox tradition, guarantees earthly solvency by selling twenty-five Sung and Yüan paintings to Metropolitan Museum of Art for $2.5 million. Much ado in the press; suggestions that Met, in first major Chinese purchase since Bahr fiasco, has once again paid extravagantly for works of dubious merit. Subsequent events in the marketplace, however, vindicate both parties; good deal at the time for Wang, wonderful bargain in retrospect for the Met. Paradigmatic vignette: Wen Fong, special consultant to the Met for Asian affairs, decides to reattribute jewel of the group, *Summer Mountains*, early Sung silk hand scroll. Wang says painting is work of Yen Wen-kuei; Wen Fong reattributes it to Yen's pupil Ch'ü Ting—only hitch being that not a single other Ch'ü Ting painting survives for comparison. Wang now says, "I sold this to the Met as Yen Wen-kuei. Wen Fong says it is not Yen Wen-kuei. I should take it back and refund the money." Brouhaha on head of pin of course obscures fact that, above all else, *Summer Mountains* is exceptionally beautiful work of art. So, who cares? Chinese connoisseurs care.

After the Met sale, Wang's collection still comprised 150 paintings. It now contains perhaps twice that number, late T'ang to Ch'ing. No one but Wang, not even his wife or children, has seen the whole thing. Maxwell Hearn, associate curator in the department of Asian art at the Met, says, "We've always talked to C.C. about another group of paintings, and it would be marvelous if we could have the whole collection. Part of the mystique of the collection is not knowing exactly what is there."

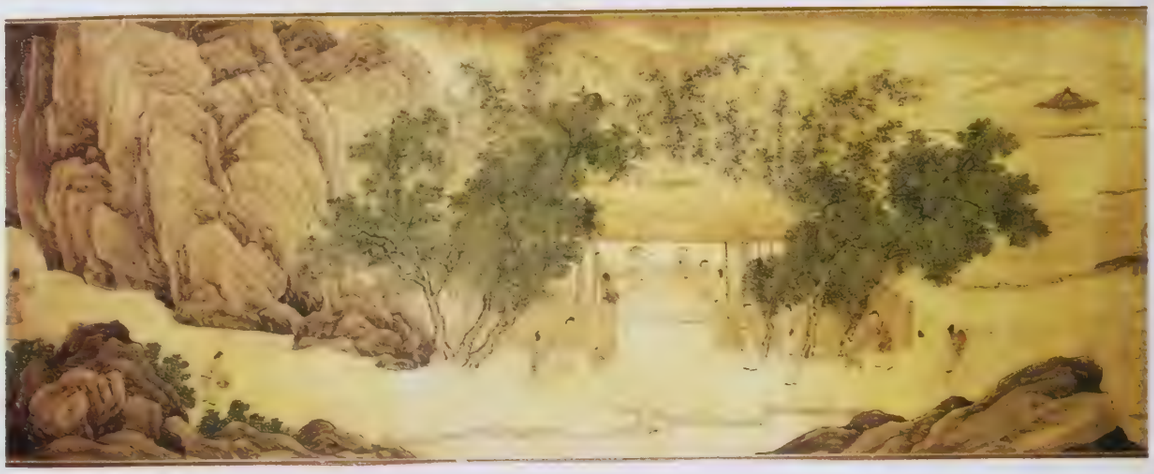
Wu Tung, curator of Asiatic art at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts, says, "Any museum in the world would love to have C.C.'s collection—especially if they didn't have to pay."

Who might have $25 million or more to spare? Donald Trump, approached not long ago, said, "Hey, sorry, I'm just not into art." Wang, who bristles at being called a "dealer," depends on middlemen to handle these matters. One such associate, Michael Gallis, an architect and collector from North Carolina, says, "It's amazing that even some of the major scholars in Chinese paintings still view C.C. merely as having a large group of paintings. They don't understand it as a great *literati* collection. These are the works that belong to C.C. Wang the artist, and they have become part of his personality as an artist. It would be like having Rembrandt's collection of paintings intact. What did he buy? Why did he buy it? What did it signify to him? What you have with C.C. Wang is not simply an assorted group of a few hundred paintings. You actually have a highly organized structure. Not long ago the Met made an offer to buy a large group from the collection, but C.C. said, 'My collection is like a sculpture. The Met kind of wanted half the head, one elbow, and the left foot. It would just look odd after these were gone.'"

A few years ago, Wang endured some serious medical problems, but he has returned to vigorous health. Once you get past the elevator operator, you are greeted by an immediately affable man with a broad, round, eggshell-delicate face, a tonsure of gray hair, and a low, chuckling laugh. He wears black-framed tinted eyeglasses. His wife, Yuan-su Wang, herself a gifted but lapsed figure and flower painter, extends a diffident welcome and then departs. Wang has spent the morning practicing calligraphy, because "calligraphy is like dance; you have to exercise every day." The apartment is, in the words of an art-historian friend of Wang's, "full of *wei-tao*" (literally, flavor). Two Ming paintings hang from nails above shoji screens that frame the wide doorway to Wang's studio, a converted dining room with a waist-high



C. C. Wang likes to apply the term "mind landscape" or "mountains of the mind" to his ink-and-color landscapes, which show a rich blend of Western and traditional Chinese art. Top: *Landscape #997* (1987); left: *Landscape #465* (1983).



Above: Details from two Ming hand scrolls, *Happiness of the Farmer's Life*, by Chou Ch'en (top), and *Peach Blossom Spring*, by T'ang Yin. Opposite: Anonymous *Feasting in a Palace* depicts living quarters of Chinese nobility (late T'ang).

painting table, dozens of brushes stored in wooden brush stands, a leather easy chair and ottoman, and an ink-stained rug. A cloth-covered table sits in the center of the living room, which also contains a rosewood-and-leather sofa and armchairs, blue-and-white ceramic stools, and low teak cabinets along the walls. A large T'ang ceramic horse, a bronze ritual vessel, a sixth-century stone Buddhist figure, and pre-Columbian and African stone and clay sculptures are arranged above one row of cabinets. Wherever Wang has traveled, he has looked at mountains and collected bits of them. A black igneous rock, a former piece of Japan, sits on a rosewood pedestal atop a small table. The raw furrowed rock, massaged by the elements so that, bonsai-like, it now resembles a miniature mountain range, is, Wang says, his "teacher." As a painter, as a collector, as a connoisseur, he has looked for what is natural and abstract. A diamond is pretty, but shallow: "I look for the depth, the beauty that is abstract." Gesturing toward the rock, he makes pointillist daubs in the air. "The depth, the soul of Chinese painting, is, I think, the brushstroke."

C. C. Wang does not play golf, raise orchids, bird-watch, or hang out at Cal Tech's Betting parlors. He paints, he writes, he reads, he teaches painting, he looks at paintings, he talks about painting, and [illegible] conversation about painting proceed [illegible] without [illegible] opera.

"I'm a[illegible]," he says. "Is a little different from [illegible] great scholar. I am a painter. I have [illegible] as beautiful. It's not just the image [illegible] The brushstroke is the soul in Chinese [illegible] about all of the opera—you need a story and scenery—but without singing there is no opera. A voice isn't a copy. You have to have your individual voice. Caruso's voice, how it sounds—this is not a question for a historian. You should understand singing before you can criticize. Is it Caruso because he's dressed like Caruso? On the stage is a short fat man with a beard. Fine. But is the voice Caruso? Brushwork is the most important element to determine authenticity. I so seriously love painting I want to know what it is. If I'm not a painter I can love painting, but only so far."

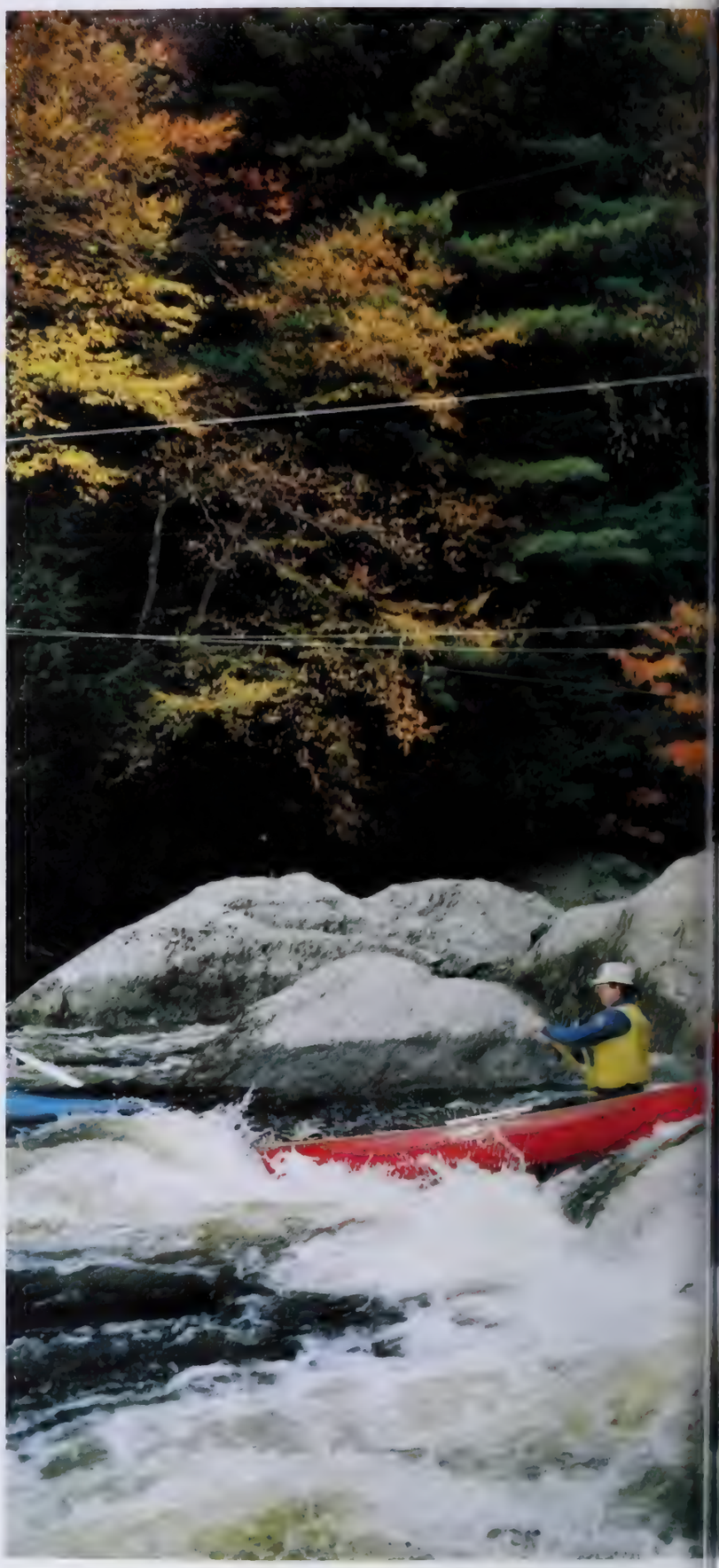
Describing the brushwork of his favorite painter, Ni Tsan, the most abstract of his *literati* forebears, he says, "It has nothing to tell you, but you know it's beautiful."

He owns "five or six" Ni Tsans, and now he brings out two—one on silk, the other on paper. Using a fork-tipped brass-and-bamboo rod, he lifts each one and suspends it from nails near the ceiling. The work on paper, nineteen by thirteen inches, shows rocks, a stream, trees.

"This is very good," Wang says. "I don't know why I like it. When I look at the details everything pleases me. Is not a big picture but I don't care. This is like Caruso singing a simple song, only five minutes. Ni Tsan's attitude is 'My voice is so good I don't need to play games.' What is this called?" He studies an inscription in the upper right corner. "*A Studio along the Bank.* Maybe *Along the Stream Bank.* The title is not important. Ni Tsan has written a poem in the corner. This is like a pleasant conversation." He steps back from the painting, which he has owned for thirty-five years. "Far away is okay. It tells you what kind of song it is. But if you want to appreciate Ni Tsan"—his face is now four inches from the scroll—"you have to listen close."

Mark Singer is a staff writer for the New Yorker. *His book* Mr. Personality *will be published by Knopf in January.*

End of the day; boaters lash up canoes and head for that night's inn.



By Peter A. Iseman

FORCED to choose between two great loves—the mountains and the sea—most of us strive tenaciously to have both. I myself have climbed the lowly high points of New England's offshore islands and sailed on mountain-rimmed reservoirs in the Rockies. The most harmonious solution I have found to date, combining the godly grandeur of the mountains with the meditativeness and rush of water, is to get into a canoe and wander inland on rivers. Vermont, with its comfortable distances, diverse watersheds, and abundance of good runnable rivers, is the best place I know to do it. Last fall I set out to traverse the small state by canoe; in a week I would run a delectable variety of seven rivers—some somnolent and pastoral, others exuberant and playful, and one as tumultuous as a flume ride.

There is a surprising and wonderful natural link between the turning of the leaves and the rising of rivers in fall. The striations of the riverbanks tell the whole story. With the brisk night frosts of late September and October, as whole hillsides of leaves die, turn color, and drop, a surge of groundwater suddenly runs back to the rivers. They flow more amply again, rising up in a seeming final salute to the season. If you time it right, the leaves will peak all around you as you paddle downstream.

Rivers flow one way—downstream. Thus, a Vermont boater requires two cars, roof racks or a trailer, and a knowledge of the rural dirt roads leading to each river's optimal put-in and take-out points. More advisable for a visitor are the services of a statewide canoe outfitter. Outfitters provide canoes, all requisite river gear, hands-on tutorials in basic canoeing skills, and trained guides who attend to itineraries and transportation. By night they offer a medley of Vermont country inns selected for a mixture of ambience, ample meals, warm showers that will not give out, and proximity to the next day's river. Because the rudiments of canoeing are readily learned, all who are game to go are welcome.

Bound for my first Vermont river on an overcast day in early fall, I met up with the proprietor of BattenKill Canoe, a genial former [illegible] named Jim Walker, who rather resembles a rural [illegible] In his early forties, he sports orange-striped eyeglass [illegible] called Chums and a T-shirt inscribed "Love Many, [illegible] and Always Paddle Your Own Canoe." Our

Photogr[illegible] by Len Jenshel

O[illegible] TIME AND THE[illegible]

Riding the wild West requires a careful reading of the river, perfect timing, and spare, graceful strokes to balance the river's crushing counterforces.

RIVERS

A canoeist's varied view of Vermont in the autumn

mobile headquarters for the next several days is his maroon Dodge van with green Vermont KANU plates, hitched to an ingenious trailer rig equipped inside with enough items to stock a sporting-goods shop. The interior of Jim's van is an explorer's portable office, with local atlases detailing every farm road and logging trail in northern New England and an indexed file of word-processed trip reports on virtually every passable stream in the state. All this reconnaissance is necessary, Jim explained, because Vermont rivers behave like changelings.

By phone, I had arranged with Jim to run a bouquet of seven rivers picked with an eye to water quality, character, and challenge—and for their far-flung geography and scenery, as I hoped to see what has become of the state I loved as a child. For a first-day river Jim picked the pastoral Lamoille to limber up on. A fairly clear alluvial runoff river, the Lamoille slices through the Green Mountains on a westward course to drain eventually into Lake Champlain. The valley on both sides of us is a postcard idyll, an open floodplain of rolling, verdant farmland spotted with black-and-white Holsteins and flanked by mountains to the north and more-distinct, statuesque peaks, such as Camel's Hump, to the south. Higher still looms 4,393-foot Mount Mansfield, with its summit ridge resembling the forehead, nose, and chin of a recumbent giant. Through a long calm stretch punctuated by periodic riffles, we paddle solo side by side—a perfect setting for trial-and-error instruction in a dozen basic strokes and maneuvers. Jim explains the rudiments of white water, which enable a canoeist to use the river's currents to control his downstream progress. "If you learn nothing else in your visit to our country," he jests, "learn what an eddy is." An eddy is a merciful haven of still water just downstream from an obstacle. The lesson he is trying patiently to impart is that I must learn to read the river, to grasp in a downstream glance how its hydraulics can work in my favor, and to spot the eddies well ahead. Then, he coaches, use your strokes to get you there before the river sweeps you away.

Useful advice, as just ahead the Lamoille constricts and speeds down over a series of ledge drops culminating in the one test of the day. To get through the daunting Ithiel Falls without an involuntary swim, I must carve a quick chain of descending diagonal zigzags. If I snag on a rock and spin broadside to the river, I "flunk and dunk." The roaring white noise of tons of falling water on rocks triggers the adrenaline, making my blood pump and narrowing my peripheral vision so that I scarcely see any scenery at all. It also drowns our voices, so Jim's last scouting advisories are given well above the falls, before our boats go through single-file. Unlike snow, water leaves no helpful tracks to follow. Jim stations himself below, using his upraised hands as semaphores much like a ground crewman directing a very amateur pilot. The eddies whip past before I can reach them, the bow veers as I spin off-course, but somehow the Lamoille carries me through.

A vanishing pastoral idyll—cows graze where floodplain meets farmland.

The next morning we turn north through Orleans County, a land of red barns and silos and trim white Congregational churches, toward the Clyde River, just below the Canadian border. Here, the dairy farms are up on lush green cleared hillsides, and the towns are sited high, like amphitheaters, with wide and dramatic views. After the first night of frost, wispy pennants of steam rise off the lakes, their surfaces lightly dimpled by the wind. Vermont rivers are rural but hardly wild: by 1850 almost every one in the state had been multiply dammed, and today only a two-day paddle trip is possible before one comes upon a dam, an impound-

Boaters' Woodstock: two weekends a year, thousands of canoeists and kayakers gather to test their mettle and skill in the white water of the West.

ment, and an obligatory portage. The Clyde, though, rising on the western edge of the least-populous section of Vermont, is unimpeded and nicely hidden. The charm of the Clyde lies in its varied possibilities for play.

From our put-in at a deserted beach on Lake Salem we paddle slowly across for forty-five minutes, bucking both stiff headwinds from the west and quartering southerly breezes over our bows. Vermont's winds were to puzzle me all week. While the rivers meander every which way, somehow the bloody wind is always in your face. The wider the river, the worse this war of attrition.

At the mouth of the lower Clyde, an intimate, still forest closes in around us, with thick stands of slender, upright cedars, hemlock, sweet-smelling balsam, and an occasional grand old elm. Liz Truex-Gremillion, my guide for the day, gently urges me to keep my eyes pointed downstream, "or the Clyde'll eat your lunch." For the next five miles the Clyde dodges and twists as if it were

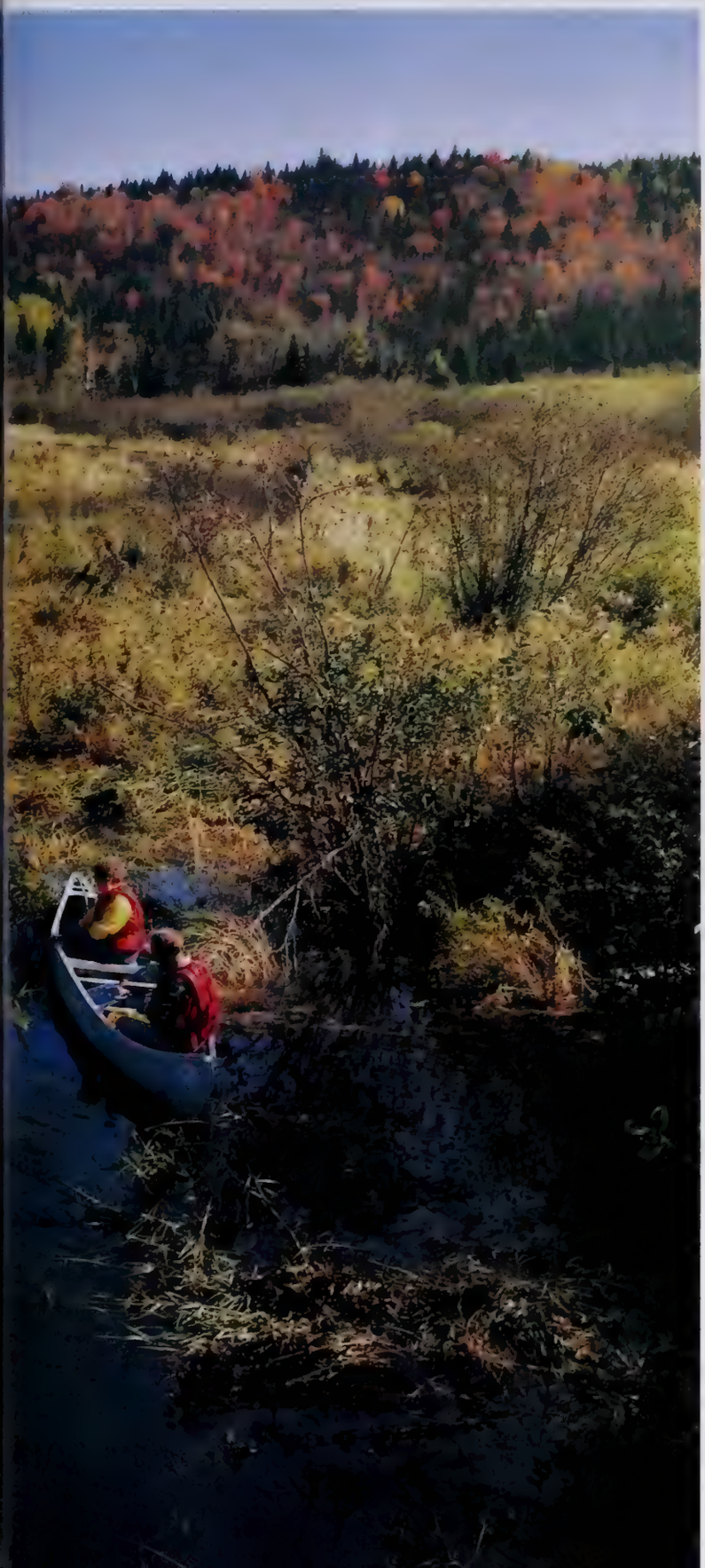
[illegible] some unseen force and play peekaboo behind large boulders. The steadily dropping gradient of the stream bed churns up riffles and small rapids, and we dodge rocks all the way down. The 250-yard stretch above and below the Derby Center road bridge, one of the few reminders of man on the Clyde, is the most rigorous I remember. As Liz speeds under it, I miss a sharp, almost ninety-degree midstream turn. It happens in an instant: the boat is full, I am half in it, half in the river. My reflex is to get free fast, remembering to stay upstream of the boat. Only when the adrenaline drops do I feel the cold river water sloshing inside my river suit. Then I laugh. As long as one has a set of dry clothes along, a swim is more a humbling dunk than a danger.

With less dignity to protect and the suspense of staying dry over, I am more open to whimsy. Led by Liz in a duet of sorts, we play a game of hopscotch among rocks downriver, emerging, finally, into the pristine still water of Clyde Pond. Secluded and

The lazy, sinuous river offers a day of respite and reward. Canoeists can meander at their own pace downstream and watch the leaves peak all around.

glassy with reflected foliage, the pond offers a nice, finishing touch of symmetry as we head toward a maroon dot—Jim's welcome van, on the far shore.

For a change of pace I paddled two rivers, the upper reaches of the great, fluvial highway of the Connecticut and the "strong brown god" of the Androscoggin, in northern New Hampshire, this time with guides from the other regional outfitter, Canoe Vermont. The pleasures of the Androscoggin are diminished only by the faintly acrid odors of paper-processing plants in nearby mill towns and a daylong driving rain. The sound of oncoming white water so forcibly concentrates the senses that I am aware of the rain in my face only on the placid stretches and while we stop briefly on an accommodating sandbar for lunch.



By contrast, the upper Connecticut, a meditative river, is leisurely enough to let the eye and the mind wander. Beyond the right bank, on the Vermont side of the broad river valley, the land is lightly cloaked in a gossamer mist of receding ground fog. The colors, especially the red leaves and occasional white steeples peeping over the evergreens, seem saturated in the soft light, before the sun burns fully through. Small, scattered graveyards reflect the historic pattern here of remote dairy farms sparsely settled. On the opposite shore in New Hampshire both the terrain and the economy change. Family farms give way to corporate logging in this granite wilderness, and the White Mountains rise precipitously behind the unfarmed meadow of the floodplain. The tracks of a long freight spur of the North Stratford Railroad run parallel to the river; on them idle scores of maroon boxcars emblazoned with the state's motto, "Live Free or Die."

As we paddle downriver through the afternoon, the guide Dave Paton reveals himself to be the consummate New England riverman. He grew up in Sharon, Connecticut, in a barn that doubled as a recording studio and office for the family business, Folk Legacy Records. Since studying ethnomusicology at Brown, he has "been out on an eastern river every day, spring, summer, fall, and winter, for the last ten years." Rivers are his métier and his calling. His battered yellow Toyota pickup carries his two dulcimers, which he plays with great skill each evening, to the delight of his guests.

The White River is the most majestic tributary of the Connect-

HOW TO GO; WHERE TO STAY

For a long weekend or a week, the package services of a canoe outfitter make eminent sense. The principal difference between Jim Walker's pioneering firm, **BattenKill Canoe** (Box 65, Arlington, VT 05250; phone: 802-375-9559), and **Canoe Vermont,** the touring arm of Mad River Canoe Manufacturers (Box 610, Waitsfield, VT 05673; phone: 802-496-2409), is temperamental. The latter conservatively favors flat water over white water and tactfully hopes to retail a canoe or two. Jim Walker is more of an improviser. On a whim he may make a stop at the Ben & Jerry's ice-cream factory to sample the latest flavor. An out-of-stater, he still enjoys showing visitors Vermont.

Country inns and bed-and-breakfasts seem to be springing up all over Vermont these days, but no one could tell me of one run by a native. Such establishments vary radically in comfort, cuisine, appointments, and overall appeal. Most inns listed in Norman Simpson's *Country Inns and Backroads* belong to an association formed by Simpson and pay dues, a sad fact quietly attested to by those who pay. I have most often learned of the best places through word of mouth. Otherwise, I look for auspicious signs: interesting books on the shelves; a menu built on local specialties, be they quail or French Canadian pork pie; and at least one characteristic in architecture, landscaping, or decor that conveys a sense of place.

Two inns bound to be on or near the route of most visitors offer especially memorable meals. Under the chef Ken Paquin's direction, the spacious dining room at the recently refurbished **Equinox,** in Manchester, serves probably the finest meals in the state that are not cooked in a friend's home. The exemplary dishes are based on French conceptions and made with fresh local lamb, veal, quail, mushrooms (the kitchen will also cook trout and other river fish from the Batten Kill to order). The **Inn at Long Last,** in Chester, offers drinks in a well-read-person's library, a roaring fire, a solid menu laced with surprises, and the singular presence of the proprietor, Jack Coleman, labor economist, garbageman, president of Haverford College and of a foundation, and now innkeeper, "at long last."

Michael and Penny Schmitt's **Inn on the Common,** in Craftsbury Common, is a Relais et Châteaux–level establishment. A fastidious concern for detail is evident in the shirred eggs at breakfast, the assertively landscaped grounds, and the vintages that emerge from Michael's wine cellar. Hampered by blue laws, for years he stocked it with cases trucked in from New York, wrapped in brown paper and addressed to "Dr. Michael Schmitt, for Laboratory Purposes Only." —*P.A.I.*

A early October morning brings a freak snowstorm, dusting the meticulously tended gardens and tennis court behind the Inn on the Common, near Craftsbury.

icult. Fair wide as it is, it becomes arduous when an unexpectedly strong headwind springs up at midday. Even with two energetic paddlers pulling hard, tempers fray as our keelless canoe slips either sideways into sandbars or, at times, backwards upstream, against [illegible] current. By contrast, my day with Dick Findlay on the Batten [illegible] shallow wooded river that ambles westward under c[illegible] toward the Hudson, brings respite and reward. Fa[illegible] downstream of the Batten Kill, Dick shows off his home river with the proprietary pride of a curator.

Whatever skills I might have acquired on six rivers in six days would be tested by the main force of our final river, the tumultuous West. Dropping southeast from the high ground of Green Mountain National Forest until it reaches a landmark psychiatric institute at its confluence with the Connecticut, the West is repressed and dammed by the Army Corps of Engineers to control floods. Two weekends a year the corps opens the floodgates of Ball

Mountain Reservoir for the benefit of boaters, turning a brown, boulder-strewn stream bed into rare eastern wild water. The image of boaters washing up in wetsuits and helmets on the lawn of the psychiatric institute brought the movie *King of Hearts* briefly to mind. For a few thousand serious canoeists and kayakers, though, the gathering on the West was more of a white-water Woodstock. As a friend and I drove the approaches early on Saturday morning, the local dirt roads became progressively jammed with vehicles with out-of-state plates toting canoes and kayaks on roof racks or trailers. Come hell or high water (and it was both), this would be their weekend on the wild West.

At the lean-to campsite that BattenKill Canoe had reserved the previous New Year's, we met up with Dave, Liz, and Jim to observe the best boaters at play in the wild. We stationed ourselves on an outcropping by a perniciously narrow zigzag of great, rounded boulders known benignly as the Dumplings. Here is the virtual limit of what even a wizard might do with an open canoe. Dave took several turns in a C-1, the smaller, more maneuverable one-man closed canoe he favors. His performance was breathtaking: a flawless reading of the river and his own position, microsecond timing, and spare, graceful strokes, which served as fulcrums to balance the crushing counterforces of the West. Both bow-down and stern-down, he was able to hover almost motionless in a standing wave, and then, as if to say, "Watch me dare," he pirouetted, only to slip off into an eddy to come again.

The lower West is said to be doable by mere mortals; so, having come this far, we decide to give it a try. Hoping to spot some line we might follow through the mayhem, my friend in the bow and I, clutching at weeds from the stern, are the last to push off. In an instant we lose sight of the others.

What followed was a maelstrom of boiling water, which became a high-speed blur in memory. Simple fear constricted my line of sight to a downstream tunnel as I strained to see the fantail plumes of white water marking the oncoming nest of rocks. Midstream islands we had been advised to leave on the right went whizzing by to the left. The din of white water before and around us drowned all communication between bow and stern, leaving us to our separate hunches of which way safety lay. As the mad flume ride continued, I realized that the trick to staying afloat, if not to looking especially graceful, was to keep our boat pointed like a dagger along the axis of the downstream current, a move as counter-instinctual as driving into a high-speed skid. But no such river stays a straight course for long. Next came a series of what seemed to be angled ledge drops, the worst of them two and a half feet of heart-in-mouth plummets to the pool below. Bystanding boaters were aghast at our wobbly, skewed landing, but the river gods and the boat designer kept us somehow aright. For a time it seemed that someone ashore was playing drums, but it was just the diminishing sound of blood pounding in my ears.

In a week we had run the gamut, from putting in at "Golden Pond" to this, which, from a neophyte's eyes, might just as well have been our "Deliverance." One felt exhilarated and grateful. After 100 miles of river and perhaps another 1,000 of country road, a small ovation seemed in order. In a moment of exuberance, we raised our paddles to the sky. □

Peter A. Iseman, a recipient of the Overseas Press Club's Hemingway Award, writes frequently about the outdoors.

Behind the restored inn's white clapboard is a designer environment.

By Robert Knafo

CLAUDE MONTANA

Look what has happened to the "bad boy of fashion"

Claude Montana is remembering the time he got the inspiration for the centerpiece of this season's fur collection. "French *Vogue* wanted to do an issue called 'Dogue,' " he says on a late summer afternoon at his Paris offices on the Rue St.-Denis. "The magazine asked if it would amuse me to dress a dog and what kind of a dog I'd want. I picked a Shar-pei. I'd seen them in pictures, but never a live one." Having finally come face to face with a Shar-pei pup, Montana designed and delivered to *Vogue* a conical hat made of wattly, sheared-mink fur. The magazine photographed it perched on the head of the fashionable canine. Having meantime fallen in love with his new and very wrinkled muse, Montana took three-month-old "Chinas" home with him. The dog [illegible] become the inspiration for one of the most striking fur coats ever made.

There is no better gauge of Claude Montana's transformation over the last couple of years than what he is doing with fur—or that he is doing anything with fur at all. Ten years ago, it would have been impossible to imagine the macho man of French fashion using mink, a material so feminine and conservative.

But Montana has made a career of delivering surprises. Unlike other virtuosos on the Paris fashion scene—Lacroix, Lagerfeld, Saint Laurent—he has never done a couture collection. He is strictly ready-to-wear, mainly because he likes the freedom it affords him—freedom from having "a mere two hundred women in mind" when he designs a collection. Nevertheless, he once told a reporter that were he twenty years older (he is thirty-nine) he would have become a couturier. Nor was he indulging in mere idle talk. In whatever style he has worked, Montana has been consistently attentive to the modeling and finishing of the fabric at hand—whether it be leather, silk, or fur.

He has made a dazzling leap from motorcycle gear and military regalia to the refined classicism of couture at its best. His latest collection, though ready-to-wear, presents something resembling a consummately feminine couture. It is in many respects an *hommage* to Balenciaga, a late-twentieth-century, not too reverent tribute to one of the most inventive designers of the century.

Montana speaks Balenciaga's name with great reverence, calling him "my idol." The Spanish couturier's imprint is evident throughout this season's collection, with its dramatically opulent volumes, efflorescent silhouettes, and softly textured, intensely hued fabrics. Fur lends itself well to Montana's fascination with the Balenciaga canon. With it he creates deeply sculptured, boldly shaped, romantic capriccios like the Shar-pei mink coat, whose shirred folds reappear all through Montana's line, from jackets to sweaters and blouses. Fur now seems to be as important a part of his fashion identity as leather

Photographs by Patrick Trautwein

MONTANA

Snug as a bug in a rug, she is wrapped in Montana's sheared-mink bolero with long panels crossed in front and flipped over the shoulders.

Hard not to love this dog: a shaded, sheared-mink "Shar-pei" stole-jacket, with squashy sleeves and fur horizontally shirred across the bodice.

once was. "In ten years of working with leather," he says, "we did everything. We made lace of it; we veined it; we embroidered it. And with fur we did the same thing. It was the first time, for example, that a gradation of colors in fur [in the Shar-pei coat] had been done." But more than presenting a challenge to Montana's iconoclasm and his technical expertise, fur, with its sensual glamour, seems to provoke some of his biggest, most fantastic fashion ideas.

Praised as an exciting, provocative, avant-garde designer, Montana in the last few seasons has been reaping the highest acclaim ever in the twelve years since his first collection. Selma Weiser, of the hip New York clothing chain Charivari, calls him "the world's greatest creator." *Women's Wear Daily,* which often criticized his early efforts, recently described him as "one of those great bottomless pools of talent from whom the rest of the world draws ideas and trends." Even taking into account the mindless exaggeration of fashion-speak, there is no doubt that Montana is at a high point in his career. The dramatics, sometimes veering into the absurd, that marked his earlier career have been tempered by a masterly sense of control and precision. He has banished the swagger and menace of the designs that made him famous in favor of a gentler, more romantic image, without sacrificing his characteristic strength and assertiveness.

"When I started," Montana says, dressed for an interview in a version of his habitual denim jacket and leather pants, "I felt too much aggression for my clothes not to be aggressive too." Notorious to this day in the fashion world, Montana's second show, in 1977, launched his dual image as preeminent leather designer and showman-provocateur. Down the runway came models in black, football-shouldered, chain-adorned leather jackets, strutting to the rhythms of fiercely barking dogs and briskly snapped chains. The attending press, especially from America, was not kind to this early effort. "They accused me of having Nazi tendencies," Montana recalls with a trace of horror.

That misreading may have been the fashion media's way of venting its uneasiness about all that black leather and those chains, while managing to avoid saying the embarrassingly obvious in print. What Montana's outré chic was rooted in was the macho leather fetish then emerging in the New York gay subculture. Transferred from its Christopher Street–bar venue, in sleekly exaggerated form, onto statuesque mannequins, this style delivered a double wallop of crossed genders and taboo sexuality. Montana "was part of the tradition of the designers who imbued women with the power of male dress," says Harold Koda, curator of the costume collection at the Fashion Institute of Technology; and in the seventies, Koda adds, it was "gay subculture that was inciting the most aggressive male images." Once over the first shock, the fashion world treated Montana as a revelation. "We had not seen that geometric, heavy-top, small-bottom fashion," says Don Norton, a fashion executive with Valentino, who bought Montana for major American department stores for some years. "We had been seeing loose-to-the-body clothes derivative of Yves Saint Laurent's peasant look; everybody had been off to Morocco. Then came Montana, and he was stunning."

Six years earlier, Montana had been just another young man without a job, much less a career, and no prospects. He now has an estimated million-dollar income, a majestic Left Bank apartment, a contemporary-art collection, a house in Capri, and a chauffeured BMW. There is a suggestion of his troubled youth in the remark that his "greatest luxury is not having to worry about money."

Born and raised in Paris, Montana had, as the little biographical information available about him makes clear, "a difficult childhood." He prefers not to say much more about his youth than generalities like "I was having problems with my family." The patchy image that emerges is that of a goalless and insecure young man who craved but failed to receive the approval of his parents and despaired of living up to the achievements of his older brother, a chemist.

In 1971, having run away from home a few years earlier, Montana, at twenty-two, went to London, where he hung out, eventually overstaying his tourist visa.

A sheared-mink jacket into whose vast collar she can gracefully retreat when the wind blows or the conversation is not to her liking.

MONTANA

A wool coat, stopping six inches above her knees, whose tent shape is achieved by astute seaming. It is closed with silver toggles and zippers.

MONTANA

"Without a work permit or a job, I was in a totally illegal situation. But I had to do something—manual work—and that was jewelry." The jewelry, concocted of fake gemstones pressed into wadded, moistened toilet paper (which hardened when baked), got a thrilled reception on the funky London fashion scene, but when he took the idea back to Paris "nobody would go for it." For the next couple of years Montana "did nothing, except traveling, doing odd jobs here and there," until what he calls *le grand déclic*—the big break.

Without a day's experience in fashion except his one-shot jewelry making, Montana applied, under pressure from a friend, for a job as assistant to the designer at a leather-clothing company called Mac Douglas. He was asked to put together a portfolio. He had never drawn before. "I put some things down on paper and showed up, and I got the job. I don't know how and why. It's still a mystery."

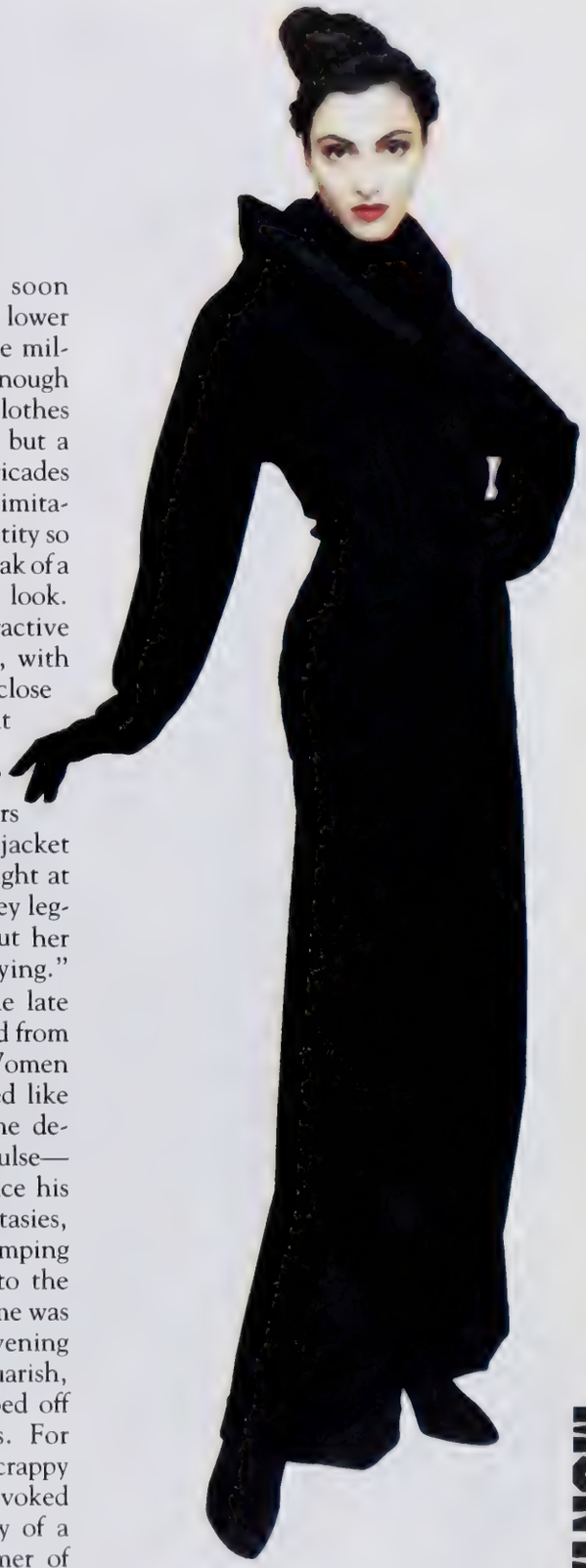
This was his apprenticeship. "In a way it was hard," he says. "It was such a total break from the way I had lived. To get up in the morning, go to work." But he looks back fondly on the experience. "It was great. I learned lots—everything. To sketch, but also to make a pattern and make something of it." The technically demanding leather business is where Montana learned the virtuoso modeling and detailing that he later displayed in his own designs. After a few years at Mac Douglas, where he tried with moderate success to enliven the conservative house style, Montana struck out on his own.

The notorious wide-shouldered black-leather jacket certified him as a virtuoso of fashion fantasy, but its silhouette had an unforeseen impact. Montana is credited with triggering the mass popularity of the shoulder-padded look in the seventies and early eighties and its reshaping of the female line. "Women look good in shoulder pads," asserts Joan Weinstein, who as the owner of Ultimo, a Montana outlet in Chicago, oversaw the fitting of thousands of middle western women with new, improved Montana silhouettes. "I think it was also a sign of the times," she adds, "when women were going through a period of becoming more important in the business world and felt perhaps a little more powerful wearing that look."

Montana's innovations were soon knocked off, disseminated by the lower tiers of the garment industry by the million. Those tall, thin, and affluent enough to wear the real thing found in his clothes not only an expensive amusement but a way of putting up some snazzy barricades between themselves and would-be imitators. Born in that debut was an identity so strong that people could begin to speak of a Montana woman and a Montana look. There was something at once attractive and intimidating about his clothes, with their power to compel you to get close but at the same time to hold you at arm's length. "Once I met a woman who dressed in Montana . . . ," began a newspaper article a few years ago. "She had on a black leather jacket with sharp broad shoulders fitted tight at the waist, leather gloves, black jersey leggings, dark glasses. Everything about her said Keep Off. She looked terrifying."

Montana's collections during the late seventies and early eighties switched from one anecdotal theme to another. Women who wore his clothes always looked like players in some fantasy-drama. The designer has a strong storytelling impulse—he calls it *l'anecdotique*—which since his first paraphrase of street-fashion fantasies, in the midseventies, has had him jumping restlessly about, from Hollywood to the military. In the fall of 1982 the theme was twenties Paris: black and white evening dresses fitted surrealistically with squarish, off-the-body lapel panels and topped off with outlandish, Dalíesque hats. For more-casual wear he conjured up scrappy blouson and beret uniforms that evoked the interwar, demimonde sexuality of a Brassaï photograph. For the summer of 1983 he borrowed his central motif from the navy, down to boat-shape hats. The following fall a World War II fighter-pilot look swept down the runways.

Whatever the specifics, well into the eighties Montana delivered uniforms for high-gloss cosmopolitan frenzies, the rounds of power-lunching and all-night nightclubbing. In the new Age of Sobriety they already look anachronistic. To most of Montana's customers, 1984 may have seemed just



MONTANA

She does not look threatening in her *grain de poudre smoking* with a zipped front and a collar that stands up on one side, curling prettily down on the other.

She has an air quite *désinvolte* in Montana's tent-shape, zip-front wool jacket with vertical panels that form an inverted corolla around her neck.

another great year to party, but for a designer committed to the social whirligig, who has a radar sense, as well, for imminent changes of style, 1984 was the year to begin distancing himself from the image on which his reputation rested. That season he set out to make, as he said, "a parody of myself." It was also a parody of the decadence of the moment. He designed black-leather jackets with rhinestone zippers. His military look of the previous year now assumed an absurd exoticism, with Gurkha belted bush jackets and knee breeches with bellows pockets. The *tenue-de-soir* mannequins were deadpan in their black tulle skirts with the monuments of Paris embroidered on them.

There is something forbiddingly unsentimental about Montana's ability to drop a set of ideas that dominated one collection in order to conjure up something totally different. He has no compunction about reversing himself, forswearing the past season's inspiration. This may be the courage of genius, but humanly speaking it is a little chilling. "Clothes age very badly," he says. "From time to time it's hard to be confronted with something one has done." Anyone wanting to know what fashion would come up with after last year's forlornly unpopular little black skirt would have done well to attend the showing of Montana's 1988 fall collection. He featured the mini the season before but has turned his back on it now. "People have just had about enough of short, don't you think?" he said crisply to *Women's Wear Daily* on that occasion, which featured ankle-length skirts and pants and what the paper called "Paris's most daring palette of deep, startling shades."

So there is a certain logic to what happened next. The year after the self-parody, he broke cleanly with what he had previously made fun of, casting out the sharp-shouldered, fearsomely assertive Montana woman, installing in her place a mellower, softer-edged, more romantic figure, although no less self-assured. Montana was becoming a more abstractly sculptural stylist. In the last three years he has shed not only the shoulder pads but also the more overt references to *this* style era and *that* branch of the armed forces in favor of strong, unadorned forms. The change is not just a matter of a new season's grab bag of ideas. Montana seems to be responding to a period of transition and his own, more subdued life-style as well as the general calming down of the late eighties. "He even did chiffon blouses," the longtime Montana observer Joan Weinstein says, marveling at his deviation into the feminine and pretty.

But something else is going on. A long-established fashion star, Montana need go no further than the myth of the couturier to script his collections. If there is any dominant "story" in his clothes now, it is he himself, Montana, heir presumptive to Balenciaga and Charles James, a modern sculptor of dramatic, glamorous forms. This ambition is evident in the bold shapes of some of his showpiece coats and jackets and especially his furs.

This year's fur collection was executed, as it has been for the last five years, by the Danish furrier Birger Christensen. In addition to the Shar-pei, there are intensely purple hued sheared-mink bolero jackets with dramatically flaring arms and, in a kind of unexpected meeting of high and low, both sporty and glamorous, a sheared-mink "bellflower" jacket zipped down the front, one version with Shar-pei wattle around the front. Also among the furs is the apotheosis of Montana's newfound romanticism, a long, "Dr. Zhivago" coat topped with a dramatic monkish cowl. Like all his other furs, it is made of sheared mink, in the soft-edged but precisely drawn spirit of the new collection.

When asked what comes next, Montana, who has gone from Hell's Angels leather to diaphanous chiffon in the space of a dozen years and does not mind forecasting his next step, contradicts himself again. Whereas in the past he might have emphasized the new, he now talks about his interest in "continuity," which means—for the time being—more strong, simplified, unadorned, feminine clothes. Until he and the Zeitgeist change, the Montana woman can look forward to something new and different: a certain romance and stability in her once hectic style. □

Robert Knafo is an editor of Connoisseur.

MONTANA

Shamelessly pretty: two long panels on either side of Montana's sheared-mink jacket form a broad shawl collar that can be brought up over the head.

MASTER FORGER

Alceo Dossena loved the past so much that he reinvented it

ULSTEIN BILDERDIENST

"I am not a swindler!" Dossena in studio amid his creations (1928).

By David Sox

In William Wyler's film *Roman Holiday*, of 1953, the reporter Joe Bradley (Gregory Peck) tells Princess Ann (Audrey Hepburn) his address is Via Margutta 51. It is a real address, but how the location came to be used, no one appears to remember. Via Margutta 51 was next door to the last studio of one of the ablest art forgers of all time, Alceo Dossena. In an early scene in the film Peck uses the phone of a busy sculpture studio that is just below his flat. This could have been Dossena's last workroom, and, appropriately, Wyler filled it with hardworking sculptors.

Alceo Dossena died in 1937, leaving a vast legacy of statuary and relicts that fooled many of the world's art experts and museum buyers. At one time or another, his output was shown in major museums in Boston, New York, St. Louis, and Cleveland, to name but a few. Most of those works were documented in a slim volume, *[illegible] Dossena Scultore*, which was published in Rome in 1955, complete with photographs. At the time of his death, the total amount paid for "Dossenas" by Americans was estimated at between $1 million and $3 million—a figure that in today's dollars would be at least twenty times greater.

Dossena was not the usual art forger. He made little money from his efforts, and none of his works were copies. He was in love with the past. "I am not a forger," he once insisted, "[or] a swindler. I never copied works. I simply reconstructed them." So convincing were his reconstructions, however, that dealers often could not resist selling them as the real thing.

The sculptor was set upon his career early in life. He was born on October 8, 1878, in Cremona, known for its superb Lombard Renaissance sculptures. His father was a porter at the local railway station. Alceo was an intelligent, if unruly, child—an enfant terrible, according to one report. He hated school but was artisti-

David Sox [illegible] Unmasking the Forger: The Dossena Deception (Universe Books), from which this article was adapted.

cally inclined, so his parents sent him to a local trade school. At first, that seemed an ideal solution. Dossena excelled in creating in every medium presented in the art workshops.

When he was twelve, Alceo felt that his sculpture teacher was not recognizing his budding talent. He made a statue of Venus at home and took it to school for what sounds like "show and tell" time. The teacher was unmoved by the creation, and the boy took it home again. On his way, he met a few of his schoolmates, who made fun of his Venus. When they parted, Alceo broke off Venus's arms and placed the statue in a hole near a playground. Several days later, the "discovery" was brought to school by a group of excited children.

Another teacher at the school was astounded by the sculpture and put it on display. When Alceo became aware of this, he entered the teacher's classroom and shouted, "You asses! I'm the one who made the statue." He reached into his pocket and pulled out the broken arms. For this outburst, Alceo was sent to the principal's office, a place with which his extravagant behavior had made him all too familiar. This time he was expelled.

Alceo worked as an errand boy for various workshops in Cremona and in time was apprenticed to a well-known stonemason and sculptor, Alessandro Monti, in Milan, repairing balustrades, columns, and statues in churches and palaces. It was soon noted that he was able to give his work the look of age. The Dossena family began to rely on the money he earned working with stone.

VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM, LONDON

Dossena's *Virgin and Child,* at home with other fakes at the V&A.

Alceo's debut as a forger probably came with his arrival in Rome as a thirty-eight-year-old soldier on leave, Christmas Eve, 1916. He was tall, slightly stooping, with an engaging smile. Making his way down Via Mario de' Fiori, a street known for its peddlers and prostitutes, Dossena carried a marble relief of a Madonna that had been "aged" in a military urinal. He hoped to sell it in one of the cafés frequented by art dealers.

One dealer, Alfredo Fasoli, was impressed with the piece and asked if Dossena had any more. The die was cast. Although Fasoli looms large in most of the accounts of Dossena's life, he was in fact a small-time operator compared with the other dealers who took an interest in the sculptor. One was Romano Palesi, a dealer in fake antique furniture, known in the Roman art trade as the "woodworm king." Palesi had a valuable contact in Carlo Balboni, in Venice, who was well established in dealing with rich American clients. Another dealer who used Dossena's talents was Ugo Jandolo, who covered his tracks well. His art-historian brother, Augusto (an art historian among other things), wrote a short biography of the forger. Curiously absent from Jandolo's recollections is any mention of Palesi, Balboni, or his brother Ugo. The sketch also failed to note that the last Dossena studio was at Via Margutta, which just happened to be next door to the prestigious Jandolo family art gallery.

The dealers were onto a good thing. By the time the press published rumors, in 1928, that a master Roman forger was at work, Dossena had created a remarkably diverse oeuvre. In 1924, for example, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston purchased a massive marble sarcophagus for $100,000, thinking it was getting a rare work by the fifteenth-century sculptor Mino da Fiesole. It was by Dossena. Interestingly, the steel heiress Helen Clay Frick had turned it down three years earlier because her agents were troubled by the tomb's provenance.

Interestingly, too, experts at the Boston museum were very reluctant to admit that they had been gulled. Although heavy criticism caused them to remove the tomb to the basement in 1927, it was back on exhibition ten years later because—whatever the truth of its origins—"it is a beautiful object." An examination had indicated, to the museum's satisfaction, that the tomb was "an original of the fifteenth century, rebuilt, partially recent, with certain additions or substitutions that did not belong to the original monument." The forger had indeed used some genuine fragments but had created the tomb figure, sarcophagus, and one of the coats of arms. The curators in Boston were hardly alone in insisting that the piece they had bought was authentic; their counterparts in other museums were equally unwilling to concede their mistakes until they had no alternative. History keeps repeating itself (see sidebar).

While the tomb was on its way to Boston, Miss Frick paid $225,000 for two life-size marble figures of the Annunciation said to be in the style of the Sienese master Simone Martini, not known to have been a sculptor. This made them especially significant, and they were placed at the foot of a grand staircase in the Fifth Avenue Frick mansion (now one of the great art museums). They did not stay there long. They proved to be by Dossena.

In September 1927 the Cleveland Museum returned a "Pisano Madonna and Child" by Dossena that it had purchased in 1924 for $18,000. The same year the "Pisano" was going home, the curators bought another Dossena for $120,000—a Greek statue of Athena. The forger had scope as well as talent. The earliest detected "Dossenas" were Renaissance style; he then went on to create convincing Etruscan and Greek pieces, the most renowned of them a terra-cotta figure of Diana the huntress.

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Fallen. Angel for the "Mino" tomb.

It went to the City Art Museum of Saint Louis in 1952, praised in *Art News* as "the most important Etruscan revelation since the discovery of the famous Apollo of Veii in 1916." Thermoluminescence tests in 1968 revealed the opposite: the Diana was made in 1936.

Roman art dealers provided the necessary provenances for the American museum buyers. Palesi liked to cite an abbey "somewhere" in the countryside near Siena, which, he said, "had been partially buried in an earthquake in the seventeenth century." He claimed that a priest had discovered the abbey and had given him its floor plan, indicating where a large number of important sculptures had been removed. Not surprisingly, Palesi said he kept the location to himself and agreed to sell the pieces abroad in secrecy.

Dossena's "Pisano Madonna and Child" was planted in a tiny convent chapel north of Rome, to which the Cleveland Museum's purchasing agent, Harold Parsons, was taken by a friend of Ugo Jandolo's. Parsons later revealed that the statue convincingly "reeked of incense." (He was later to get his revenge.) Other dealers happily concocted elaborate scenarios for gullible American buyers.

Dossena did his part in the deception. He excelled in giving an aged appearance to his works, never satisfied until each piece was just right. Sometimes, he used authentic materials. In creating Renaissance-style works in wood, for instance, Dossena reworked ancient polychrome painstakingly removed from old statues and picture frames. Up to the time of his death, he experimented with various methods of patination on stone, and, as one observer has exclaimed, "For some, Dossena may not have been a master artist, but there's no doubt he was a master chemist!"

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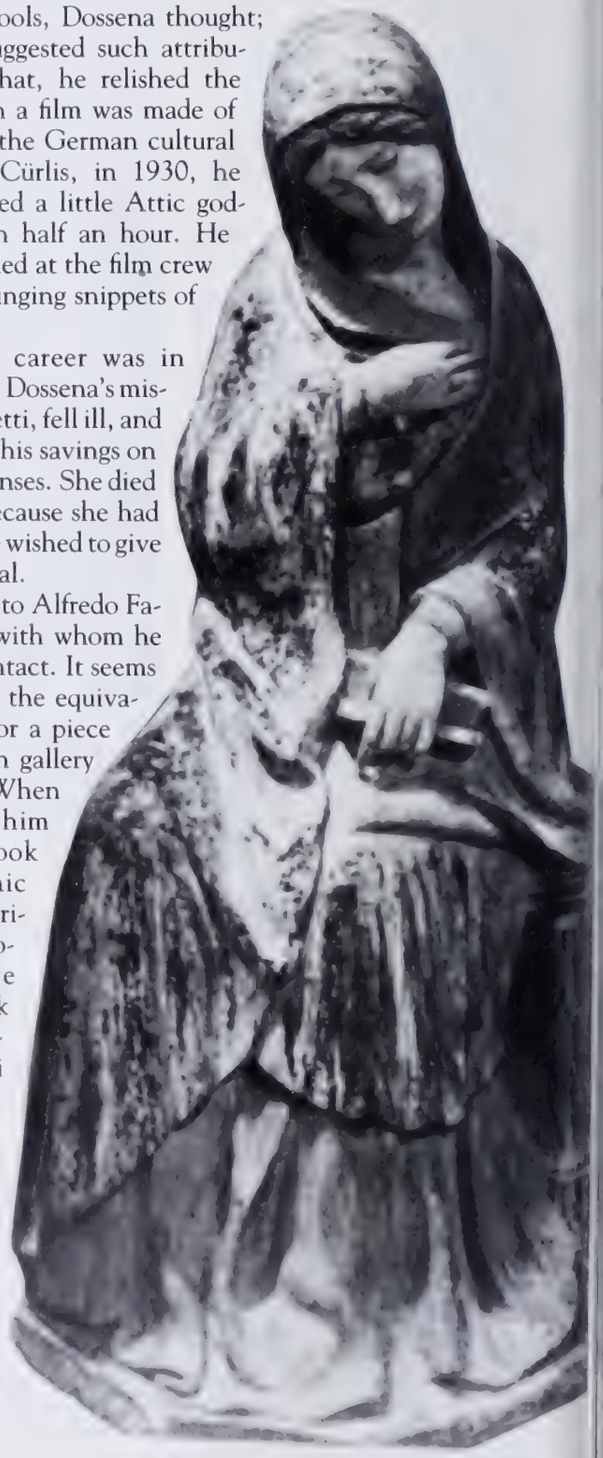

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H. L. PIERCE FUND, COURTESY MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON

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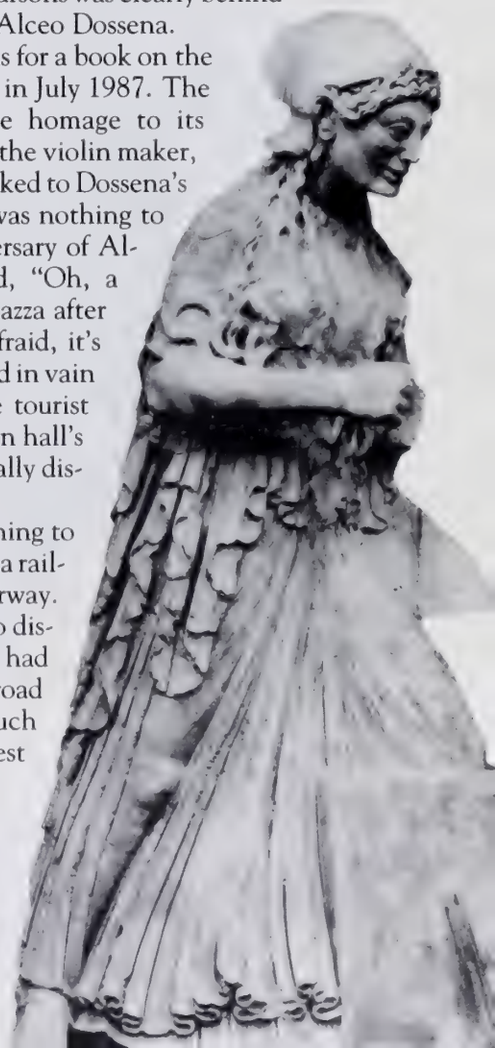

Sent packing. Dossena's *Athena*, in the Greek style, once of Cleveland.

Fallen. Angel for the "Mino" tomb.

It went to the City Art Museum of Saint Louis in 1952, praised in *Art News* as "the most important Etruscan revelation since the discovery of the famous Apollo of Veii in 1916." Thermoluminescence tests in 1968 revealed the opposite: the Diana was made in 1936.

Roman art dealers provided the necessary provenances for the American museum buyers. Palesi liked to cite an abbey "somewhere" in the countryside near Siena, which, he said, "had been partially buried in an earthquake in the seventeenth century." He claimed that a priest had discovered the abbey and had given him its floor plan, indicating where a large number of important sculptures had been removed. Not surprisingly, Palesi said he kept the location to himself and agreed to sell the pieces abroad in secrecy.

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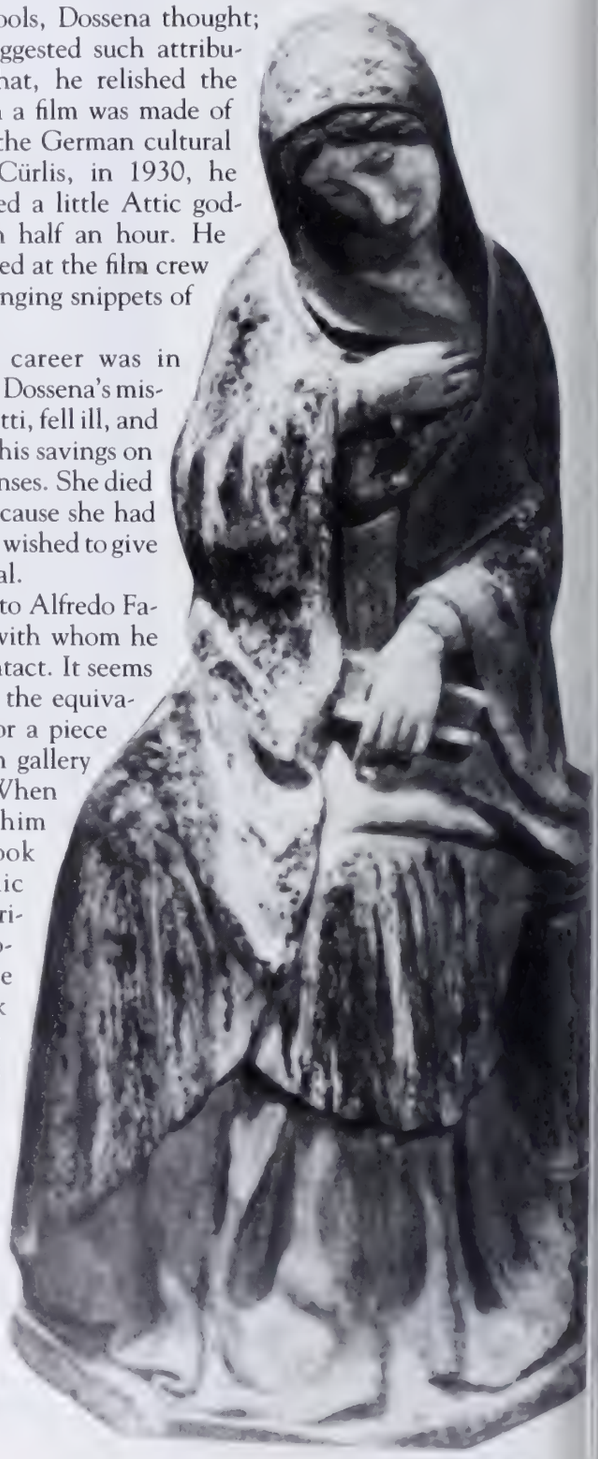

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PENN

Penn on MIYAKE

Above: Airbrush-dyed cotton apron and bag (1985). Opposite: Jacket and skirt of polyurethaned polyester jersey. Underneath, woven rattan *bustier*. Leather hat with silk veil, bamboo fan (1982).

BY DIANE RAFFERTY

Can fashion exist without photography? When great photographers team up with great designers, the results imprint themselves on our minds. The union creates what we call style. In the contemplative context of the printed page, the dialogue between form and its presentation can speak more clearly than reams of fashion journalism. Fashion and photography need each other. Sadly, in the 1960s, models began to replace the clothes as the photographer's subject. Then marketing forces took over, and, in the 1970s and 1980s, we got a variety of designers' clothes worn by laughing models crowded in shots designed by committee and reproduced on a smaller page for easier mailing. By trying to have it all, editors, stylists, and advertisers lost sight of fashion as an art.

But the marriage of fashion and photography is not entirely on the rocks, as the publication of *Issey Miyake: Photographs by Irving Penn* (New York Graphic Society Books/Little, Brown and Co., in association with Callaway Editions, $50) makes clear. Timed to coincide with a retrospective at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, in Paris, the book marks the return of that precious co-*auteur*ship of one photographer recording the works of one designer. The result is forty-six full-page color photographs, all but one previously unpublished.

Penn's stark formalism perfectly meshes with Miyake's. Both have been obsessed since youth with the pure interplay of texture, density, and form. In this book, Penn strips away everything that would detract from Miyake's clothes. There is no story, no props. He sets the clothes against a plain white background, floods them with light, and arranges them either in still lifes or on the Japanese model Jun Kano, who assumes rigidly stylized poses—of a samurai, a sumo wrestler, a geisha—that maximize the frequently loose, oversize forms of the designs, that play with Miyake's origami draping. Penn obscures Kano's face—another distraction—with hats, masks, glasses, and geisha-like white makeup.

Miyake says his clothes are "unfinished," made so that the wearer can complete them by arranging them as she wishes, fastening them with the kimono-style obi, for instance. He borrows those elements of traditional Japanese costume that permit more freedom for the wearer. His subdued pastels and earth tones never detract from the wild range of materials he uses: knits of cork and wool, cotton-wrapped fishing line for a seashell-shape jacket, paper. His clothes rarely mold the body, more frequently acting as a counterpoint to it: they go widely out at the waist, in at the bust. But when they do mold the body they do so aggressively, like warrior armor, and in brightly colored plastics.

Penn's nonnarrative approach heightens the "unfinished" aspects of Miyake's designs. And his still-life treatment beautifully renders the textures: you can see through the cloth, feel the clothes through your eyes. His shots of a black, irregularly pleated ensemble of polyester jersey coated with polyurethane and of a pleated, airbrush-dyed cotton dress make you want to riffle the pleats with your hand: they look like frozen blades of grass.

The book also marks a near return to form for Penn, whose work in *Vogue* over the past decade has looked enervated, barely recognizable. His trademark white background may be a defense against too much interference. Somehow we miss the grunginess of his old studio settings, with the camera wires exposed on the floor. They added a needed tension. Perhaps the years of working routinely in less than stimulating circumstances have taken their toll. Occasionally he repeats a pose, a sure sign of tiredness. But the spark of his genius is alive. By focusing on one designer, Penn has wrought something special. Let us hope this book marks the first of many such collaborations. □

High-Style Hungarian

Inside the Herend porcelain factory

STYLIST NOLA LOPEZ FOR TABLEWARE SEE PAGE 214

Pierced porcelain balls—examples of the nearly lost art of openwork.

Some collectors would rather have cabinets full of hand-painted plates than vitrines full of Renaissance bronzes. I am one of them. My collection of soup plates, coffee cups, and tureens grows apace. Many of these pieces are Herend china.

That Herend makes the most appealing and distinguished porcelain today is mostly a matter of survival. Since the discovery near Meissen, Germany, in the early 1700s of kaolin—the Chinese secret ingredient—the story of the manufacture of porcelain in Europe has been one of royal patronage and bankruptcy. Herend has managed to stay alive by making what looks like eighteenth-century porcelain for those who could not afford what Meissen and its rival Sèvres produced.

In 1826, when Vince Stingl opened a small ceramics factory in the town of Herend, Hungary was part of the Austrian empire, for whose ruler royal porcelain was made in Vienna. Stingl too decided to try his hand at porcelain, but without financial success. Chief among his creditors when he failed, in 1839, was Móric (Maurice) Fischer.

Fischer's first attempts to please a wide audience also failed. The aristocrats who could still afford hard-paste porcelain either bought it from Vienna, Meissen, or Sèvres or bought Chinese and Japanese exports. Fischer took a new tack. He copied everyone else's patterns, and soon the aristocracy relied on him to replace their broken china.

The factory became famous for copying and adapting Meissen patterns, many of them of Japanese or Chinese origin, as well as the Oriental

By Corby Kummer

Photographs by Lizzie Himmel

originals. Queen Victoria, impressed by one Herend amalgam of Oriental motifs of butterflies and flowers, ordered an entire service for Windsor Castle. The pattern, named after her, is still one of Herend's biggest sellers. Aristocrats throughout Europe followed suit. Fischer won medals at international exhibitions. In 1865, the emperor gave him a title, making him Móric Fischer Farkasházy. This was the apogee of his career. By the 1880s the factory had gone bankrupt.

A new golden age began when Fischer's grandson Jenő bought it in 1897 and set out to copy Sèvres as freely as his grandfather had copied Meissen. He also made Herend a center of arts-and-crafts ceramics. Jenő Farkasházy, as he called himself, using the title conferred on his grandfather, managed Herend until his death, in 1926.

As labor costs increased and long training periods became prohibitively expensive, the minutely detailed hand painting that most Oriental and eighteenth-century patterns require virtually ceased to exist. Sèvres makes only a few of the patterns it produced a century ago. Meissen, in East Germany, has the labor force to make more, but its stock is limited. Herend is left with the prettiest repertoire of patterns of any porcelain manufacturer in the world.

I recently visited the Herend factory, one of the most successful in Hungary and surely one of the pleasantest. Its grassy, tree-shaded courtyard looks as it did when Fischer built it, in the 1840s, with its long, low two-story buildings. "I like the courtyard best," said Robert Csengői, director of the Budapest office, who was my guide. "It looks like a castle."

The interior is surprisingly quiet. Near one entrance, two machines mix kaolin, feldspar, and water into a gray slurry that goes through a vacuum and comes out clay. The clay is either dried further and formed into logs for plates and other thrown pieces or kept liquid to fill molds for figurines, cup handles, and the like. Men wheel dollies with stacks of logs to the next stations and come back with buckets full of scraps of clay to be reused.

In a nearby room, women fill molds for small parts like the gills of fish or feet for vases, using undecorated Herend pitchers full of liquid clay. The white plaster molds are ingeniously designed to break apart in unexpected places, leaving small gray pieces of porcelain so soft that one touch will spoil them. "Feel that," Csengői said, as a woman unmolded half of a fish body. I lifted it with my thumb and forefinger. The body collapsed. Csengői looked at the woman; she looked at me.

The molds for bowls are open at the top. The worker fills one mold with clay, waits until an outer wall sets, and then dumps the liquid center back into a jug. The molds for salad and serving bowls require so much clay that tanks above the ceiling supply liquid clay to the workers. After unmolding, the pieces dry for several days before being fired.

Plates are made from logs of solid clay. I watched a woman and a man making them together. The woman lopped off a slice of clay and set it on a flat, spinning wheel to widen it. The man then took the flattened disk, put it on a spinning plate mold, and lowered a bracket that cut a lip and a raised rim. With a wet sponge he wiped excess clay from the surface and set the plate to dry. Without looking he then reached for the next disk. The two did not talk—no one did. They may well have grown up next door to each other. The factory employs 1,600 of Herend's 3,000 residents, and it is said that there are few secrets in the town.

The four women who make baskets have a room to themselves, each working beside a window framed with plants. I watched one at work. A machine extruded nests of spaghetti-like clay that she ingeniously twisted and looped to form the sides and base. Experienced as she was, it took her a while to make it. On a good day she finishes thirty-four.

Csengői led me to the firing room, where pieces are first fired at 980° C, usually after being dried for several days. The gray, unglazed porcelain, or biscuit, is still fragile afterward, so porous that my tongue stuck to a cup when Csengői told me to lick it. The biscuit is then dipped into a lilac-colored aniline glaze—"It soaks it up like a beach after a wave," Csengői said—and fired again, at 1,410° C. This time it emerges glassy and white. Each piece is carefully checked for cracks or unglazed patches; these are painted over with more of the lilac glaze and fired again. I put my finger on a retouched portion of a plate ready to be refired. The glaze came off on my fingertip. Csengői decided at that point that it was time

Teacup and saucer in the "Bouquet de Herend" pattern; the openwork basket, teapot, teacup, and creamer are "Chinese Bouquet," created in 1930, one of Herend's best-loved patterns.

The cream soup and saucer and the tureen are in the "Cornucopia" pattern, created for the shah of Persia in the 1870s. The lemon on a leaf is a place-card holder.

for us to visit the painters.

Each of them has a large work space decorated with posters and plants in misfired cachepots. With all the windows, some studios look like greenhouses. The smell of turpentine is everywhere.

To become one of the factory's 550 to 600 painters, applicants, most of them women, must pass an aptitude test. The three years of schooling are paid for by the factory. When they begin work, painters start on easy patterns, like the one with flowers called "Apponyi" in Hungary (after the count who first bought a set) and in America "Chinese Bouquet."

Transferring the outline by blotting carbon over a stencil is not very hard. Neither is gilding an edge; painting butterflies and birds is, and one person must be skilled enough to do it all from start to finish. Each painter keeps at hand a completed piece in the pattern. The fine brushes, pen nibs for outlines, gold, and pigments are all imported. Some pieces, like the boldly decorated Chinese foo dogs, make extravagant use of the materials. Depending on how many colors are used, there can be six firings, as with the foo dogs. Gold is always fired last.

One studio is given to the seven "master painters," who execute the biggest, most difficult pieces, including limited editions and special orders, such as a set of horse figurines for a horse breeder. The master painters have extra space; work runs to copying botanical prints and creating fragments of designs for new patterns.

In this studio a dilemma presents itself: many of the biggest and most difficult pieces are gaudy, even vulgar. Perhaps some of the master painters who work on these dubious showpieces long for something simpler. Beside the elaborate octagonal coffee cups he was working on, one man had a plain white plate with one large chrysanthemum in underglaze blue. (Underglaze colors, painted on biscuit, look like Japanese watercolors; the biscuit absorbs the color and softens the edges.) The plate

Herend's repertoire of porcelain patterns is the prettiest of all.

was the most attractive object in the room.

As I was leaving, one of the master painters showed me a large tray on which she was painting cabbage roses against a brown background. The plate was part of a limited edition for Hong Kong, its rim finely perforated. "Feel how even and smooth the openwork is," she said. I looked at Csengői and declined.

Before leaving the factory for lunch in the executive dining room, down the street, we visited the Herend museum. In it are examples of many of the 3,000-odd patterns the factory has made in its century and a half. All the year round there are demonstrations of porcelain painting for Eastern and Western visitors.

We also visited the room where exports are packed. Seventy percent of the factory's production goes to the West, and the shelves of the storeroom overflow with the most beautiful examples of what Herend makes. They are grouped in lots for various countries. I wanted to grab an empty carton and start packing up trays, bowls, and coffee pots for a lot of my own. Another room, for export to the Eastern bloc and Russia, was half the size and almost bare. The patterns were simpler than any I had seen; there were no dinner sets, only odd pieces. "No one can afford a whole set," said Csengői. "Most of these pieces go for government bureaus and factories to use as gifts."

The supply of patterns at the factory shop constantly fluctuates but is far from complete, and tourists do not find the bargains they expected.

The cafeteria and executive dining room are in a new building. As we ate our goulash soup from white bowls with a raised scallop decoration (more factory seconds), Csengői explained that an average salary is $160 a month; master painters and executives earn up to $210 a month; workers get a profit-sharing bonus once a year. All but twenty-eight of the workers at Herend belong to a trade union, which renegotiates contracts each year. Everyone complains about the hours—six to two—but referendums on beginning at seven are always voted down.

After lunch I went to meet the commercial director, Jozsef Kovacs, in the most tempting room of all, the showroom. Here is almost every pattern made—more than 2,000—many of which do not come to America. Few new patterns are introduced, and those on dis-

Plates and platter in the "Fruits and Flowers" pattern, created in the 1860s. The doomed imperial Russian court bought a service in 1900.

play were much less successful than the old ones around them. The new patterns that sell are based on old motifs.

Kovacs appeared, to explain, in rapid, idiomatic English, that Martin's Herend Imports, in McLean, Virginia, is the sole U.S. distributor. Every year he decides how much he will allot each country and what he will charge. America is now his first priority—the turnover is fastest—but Western Europe and Japan, a new market, are also important. Production is strictly limited, because of the difficulty of training and housing painters in Herend but also because of the need to keep demand and prices high.

This talk of markups and limited production was a cue for a question I had been longing to ask: "How can I buy some of this wonderful china?" My gesture indicated the whole, tempting showroom.

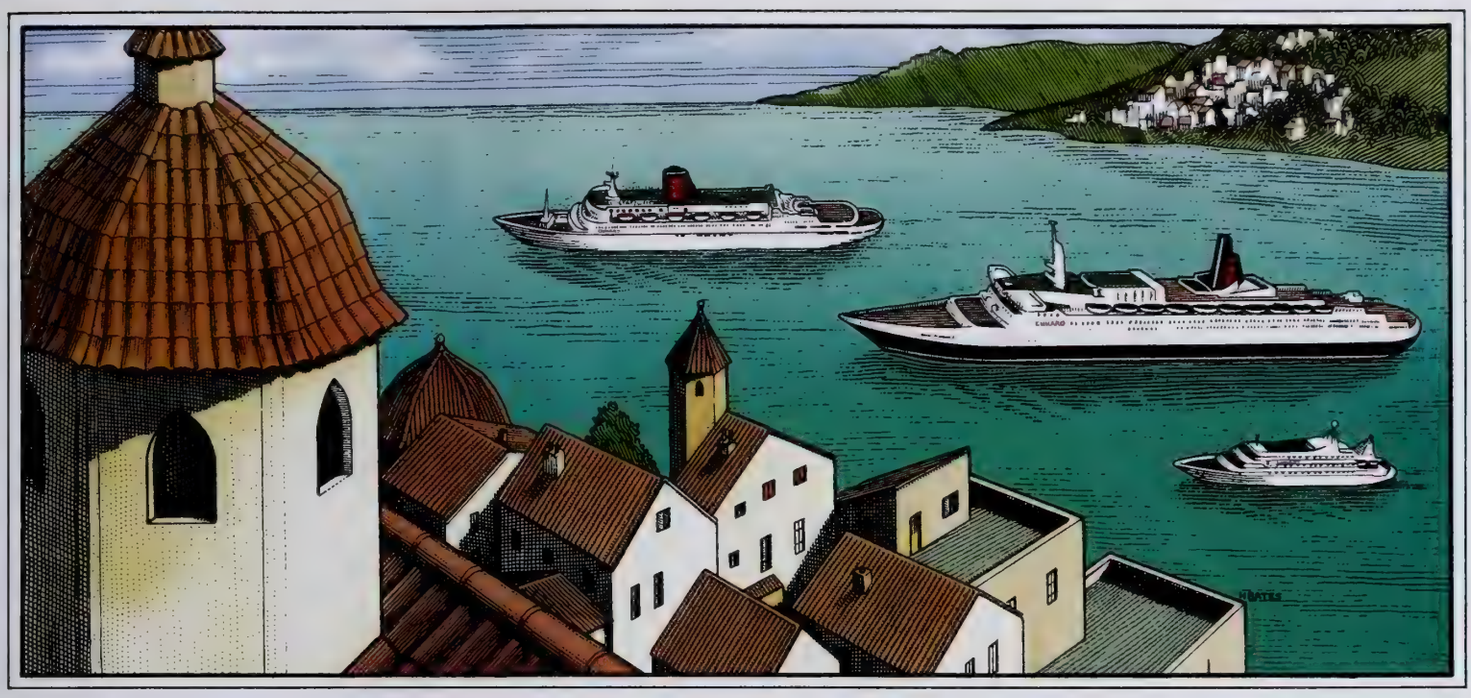
"Where do you live?" Kovacs asked with a look that led me to suppose that he was thinking in terms of wholesale and ease of shipping.

"Boston."

He did not skip a beat. "Neiman Marcus," he replied. □

Corby Kummer wrote about Italian inns for the July 1988 Connoisseur.

"Yellow Dynasty," based on the porcelains of the Japanese Kakiemons, a pattern first made for Empress Elisabeth of Austria-Hungary in the 1850s.



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SNUFFBOXES: SMALL OBJECTS THAT CAN COMMAND HUGE PRICES

BY ROBIN DUTHY

French Empire snuffbox, Medusa cameo: $7,425.

COURTESY SOTHEBY'S NEW YORK

Snuff is powdered tobacco mixed with essential oils. When it is inhaled, the nicotine is quickly absorbed into the bloodstream via the nasal mucosa. The sniffer, or snuffer, experiences a lift comparable to that enjoyed by the inhaling smoker. However, while it is probably a lot less dangerous to sniff tobacco than to smoke it, it is far from harmless, according to the surgeon general. Various cancers may appear at the site of exposure. Let the sniffer beware.

There are still a few regular snuff takers around in the United States, mostly in remote rural areas, though the habit has never quite caught on in this country as it did in Europe, where in its eighteenth-century heyday it largely displaced smoking. After 1800, it began to be associated with the foppish behavior and affected flourishes of the Regency dandy. Lessons were even given in the exercise of the snuffbox "according to the most fashionable Airs and Notions," and so these little boxes became not so much containers for a powdered herb as the focus of an elaborate social ritual and the symbol of vanity and fashion. As the nineteenth century progressed, cigars and cigarettes took hold and snuff started on its steady, inexorable decline.

German jeweled snuffbox, ca. 1770: $115,000.

COURTESY SOTHEBY'S NEW YORK

Its lasting legacy, however, has been the [illegible] assortment of fine boxes made in silver, gold, and other materials, mostly of [illegible] workmanship, some of them exqui[illegible] art. Wealthy eighteenth-cen[illegible] must own at least a dozen [illegible] each morning to [illegible] in 1713–86, Berlin [illegible]

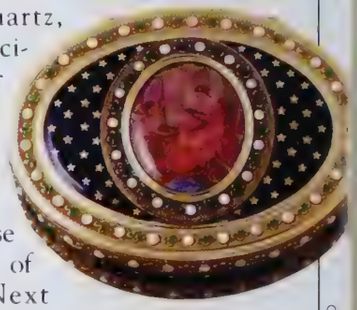
ter. The king was a dedicated snuff taker, and, though austere in his dress and habits, he gave a suppressed extravagance outlet in the sensationally flamboyant boxes he commissioned. He is known to have cared more for his superb collection of snuffboxes than even for his paintings, among which were several Watteaus that were dear to him. Berlin boxes were known for their technically superb relief mosaic carved in such materials as ivory, pearl, and coral. Flowers, leaves, fruit, even insects were carved in colored hardstone and fixed to background panels of jasper or chrysoprase.

Frederick had inherited 600 boxes from his mother, but by the time he died the collection had grown to 1,700. Every year on December 22, the king and his court moved from Potsdam to Berlin to spend a few weeks. One coach drawn by six horses carried his greyhounds, while strapped to the back of a dromedary caparisoned with a green saddlecloth was a chest containing a hundred of Frederick's snuffboxes. When the caravan arrived at the palace, these boxes were filled with specially scented snuffs and set out for the king's use.

Steinkabinett with specimen stones: $48,600

Prices for the finest gold snuffboxes—that is, the top 2 or 3 percent of the market—have risen by 1,000 percent since 1975. The growth rate tapers off as you descend the price-quality scale, reaching zero growth for the worn and battered engine-turned silver boxes of the nineteenth century. American and Swiss collectors dominate the market and have been paying astonishing prices to secure the ultimate in this field.

At the top of the scale are the unsurpassed gold boxes of Frederick the Great's Berlin, one of which—a dazzling creation of gold and mother-of-pearl encrusted with rivers of diamonds and flowers in amethyst, quartz, turquoise, and citrine—sold for over a million dollars at a Christie's sale in Geneva in 1986. These are in a league of their own. Next come the very ritzy Russian boxes of the same period, which can be worth up to half a million dollars. In third place come the finest French examples. Often enameled with pastoral scenes derived from Boucher and Fragonard, these sell in the $100,000-to-$150,000 range.



French gold-and-enamel snuffbox, 1784: $8,800.

COURTESY SOTHEBY'S NEW YORK

But leaving aside these fabulous baubles, you do not have to be in or even close to the Forbes league to enjoy superb examples of this art, for way down in the $20,000-to-$40,000 range astonishing workmanship that cannot be matched to-

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INVESTOR'S FILE

German carved bloodstone box, ca. 1745: $8,250.

COURTESY SOTHEBY'S NEW YORK

day is still to be found. Farther down the scale still comes a group of Swiss boxes, often prettily enameled, which fetch $5,000 to $25,000. Among the least expensive but nevertheless beautiful boxes are the typical eighteenth-century English gold-mounted hardstone boxes that can be bought for as little as $1,000 to $3,000. These categories are anything but clear-cut, and an example by the greatest of English goldsmiths, George Michael Moser (1706–83), or the Swiss enameler Jean-Louis Richter (1766–1841) could easily reach $100,000.

It was when Columbus made his voyages to the New World, in the early 1490s, that the use of tobacco was first witnessed by Europeans. Friar Ramon Pane was puzzled

FREDERICK THE GREAT HAD A COLLECTION OF 1,700 SNUFFBOXES.

to see the Taino Indians of Haiti sniffing a mysterious powder. He soon discovered that when the chiefs wanted to consult their fetishes on issues such as the harvest, war, sickness, and so on, they would retire to a special house where, according to his report eventually published in 1511, ". . . snuffinge up into theyr nosethryls the pouder of the herbe cauled Cohobba [Arawak for tobacco] . . . they say they immediately see houses turne topsy turvye and men to walk with their heeles upwarde: of suche force is this pouder utterly to take away all sense."

By 1600, translations were circulating of a Spanish medical book that made extravagant claims for tobacco's therapeutic powers. The English version of 1599 by Henry Buttes claimed that it "cureth any griefs, dolour [pain], opilation, impostume [abscess], or obstruction, proceeding of cold or winde: especially in the head or breast: the leaves are good against the Migram [migraine], cold stomackes, sick kidnies, tooth-ache, fits of the mooth-

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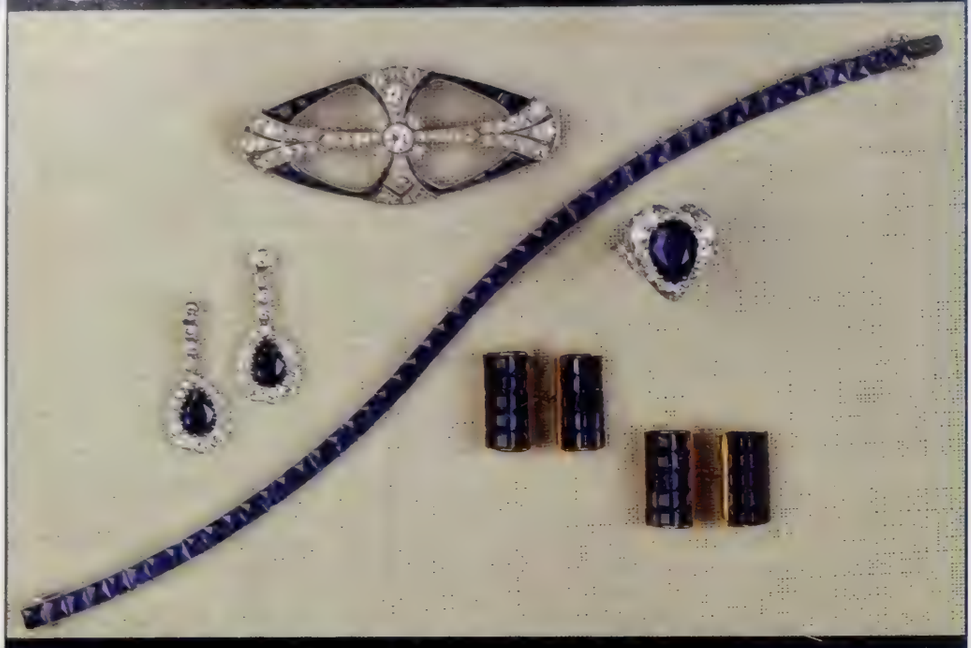

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er, naughty breath, scaldings or burnings. . . ." That this referred to the use of snuff is suggested when the account continues, "The fume [smoke] taken in a Pipe is good against Rumes, Catarrhs, hoarsenes, ache in the head, stomacke, lungs, breast: also in want of meat, drinke, sleepe or reast."

But from the start, snuffing and smoking encountered violent opposition. James I of England published his *Counterblaste to Tobacco* in 1604, describing smoking as "A custome loathsome to the eye, hatefull to the nose, harmefull to the braine, dangerous to the lungs, and in the black stinking fume thereof, neerest resembling the horrible Stigian smoake of the pit that is bottomlesse."

The hope that tobacco had curative or preventive powers had been dashed by around 1625; thereafter smoking and snuf-

THEY ARE SOMEWHERE BETWEEN WORKS OF ART AND OBJECTS OF VERTU.

fing began to be seen as an agreeable obsession. So widely was snuff taken, even by priests and clerics during celebration of Holy Mass in and around Seville, ". . . soiling the altar linen and infecting the churches with its noxious fumes, sacrilegiously and to the great scandal of the pious," that a papal bull of 1624 banned its use. And it was no good sneaking out to the vestry for a snort, for snuff taking was forbidden in any part of the church and its surroundings on pain of excommunication.

Snuff taking was a craze that swept Europe in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, though Louis XIV was an enemy of this habit and refused to present snuffboxes to his favorites, choosing instead a jeweled box decorated with

Russian snuffbox with precious stones, ca. 1900.

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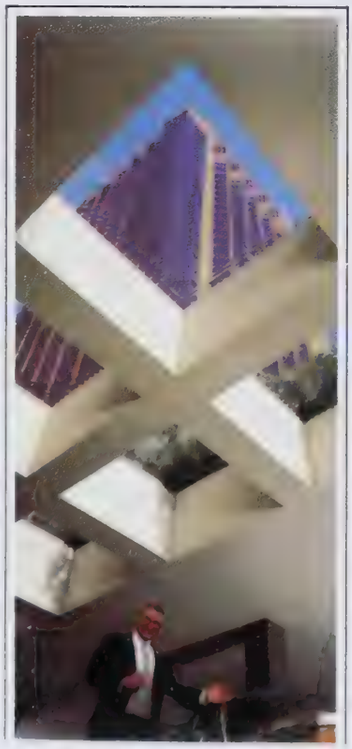

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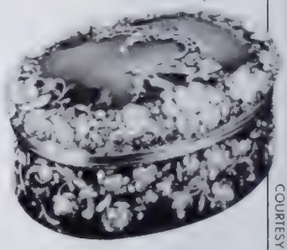
his portrait. Only in the reign of Louis XV did snuff and magnificent containers for it come into fashion. In the United States it took hold mainly in Albany, Boston, and other cities where Dutch and English customs were strongest. There were twenty snuff manufacturers in Philadelphia alone. However, a Frenchman visiting the country in the 1790s reported that, unlike the men, American women never "deform or dirty their noses by using this powder so cherished by Europeans."

Feelings about snuff ran high, much as they do about smoking today. The dyspeptic Tobias Smollett, traveling through France in the 1760s, was appalled by the sight of the "true-bred Frenchman who dips his fingers inbrowned with snuff into his plate filled with ragout [stew]; between every three mouthfuls, he produces his snuff-box and takes a fresh pinch; then displays his handkerchief, which may be termed the flag of abomination, and in the use of both scatters his favors among those who have the happiness to be near him."



Frederick the Great's snuffbox: $1,180,000.

COURTESY CHRISTIE'S GENEVA

The case for investing in snuffboxes and their investment merits must be sized up purely on their status as works of art, since the prospect of a resurgence in snuff taking is happily remote.

The first impression made by a snuffbox is that it is a miniature work of art. Leaving aside the beauty of the design and materials, many people are automatically entranced by the smallness of the object—a factor that also affects demand for stamps, netsuke, coins, and the like. Only later do collectors begin to be overwhelmed by the quality of the craftsmanship. Not surprisingly, the skills that went into creating snuffboxes of even middling quality are virtually extinct. That in itself underpins the argument for investment. If the less good pieces have been disappointing investments, it is perhaps because there has been a swing toward more-displayable works of art. Moreover, gold boxes of poorer quality whose melt value is not far below their market value have also been held down by the sluggish performance of gold.

In a sense, the value of an object can reflect or at least may one day reflect the present-day cost of the work that has gone into it. This concept has some validity in

Judith with the Head of Holofernes.
1584-1585. Paolo Veronese.
oil on canvas. 111 x 100 cm
Vienna. Kunsthistorisches Museum
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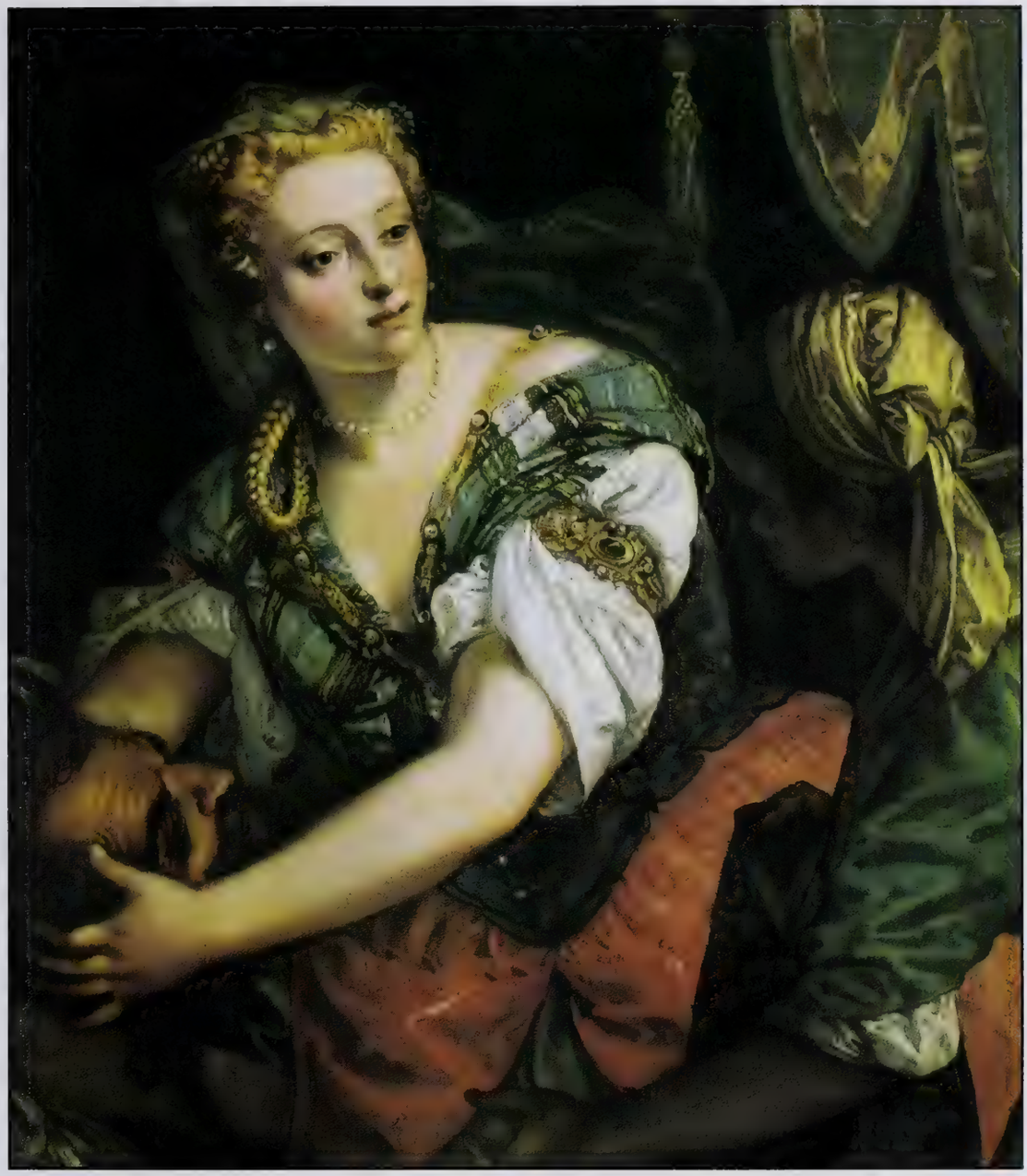

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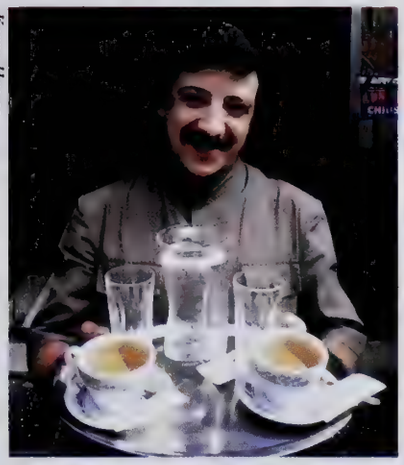

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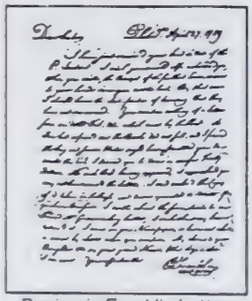

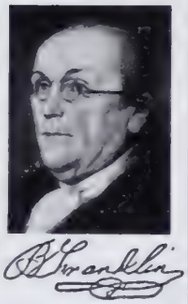

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COURTESY CHRISTIE'S GENEVA

A German box, ca. 1750—a leopard carved of pudding stone with diamond eyes and teeth: $47,000.

the case of Persian rugs, for example, where the work that goes into the knotting or weaving is taken into account in fixing the market price. In the case of a Picasso, a Whistler, or any other painting it makes no sense at all.

Snuffboxes are a borderline case. If you analyze the labor cost of a typical $5,000 gold snuffbox, it would not come to less than 150 hours at a rate of $50 an hour—always supposing a skilled enough craftsman could be found. Add in the value of the gold and any precious stones and a notional amount for rarity, and at $5,000 the box begins to look like a steal. This is not a formula that can be used to justify a market price but is rather a calculation that helps to establish the "craft" value, which in a curious way supports a market price.

Of course damage drastically reduces values. Just as battered boxes are hard to sell, so buyers pay way over the odds for those in pristine condition. Gold boxes were more often considered too precious for everyday use and have survived in better condition. For that reason, the expected disparity between the prices of silver and gold boxes is exaggerated. A newfound and almost undetectable means of repairing enamel has brought a surprising number of "pristine" enamel boxes onto the market. Experts check for repairs under ultraviolet light, but the test is inconclusive since certain enamels do not fluoresce at all. At the top end of the market, a re-enameled box will be worth 10 to 20 percent of its value in original condition; lower down the scale, buyers are more tolerant of repairs.

Some experts find that snuffboxes have always been harder to sell than vinaigrettes. These were the small boxes with a pierced lid that contained a scented sponge to which ladies would put their noses when the appalling odors of eighteenth-century cities became unbearable. That is another market anomaly which, if corrected, could help lift snuffbox prices. Snuff taking has undoubtedly had its day, but the miniature works of art this unattractive habit called into being are likely to be ever more admired and sought. □

COURTESY SOTHEBY'S NEW YORK

An Italian mosaic snuffbox, ca. 1830: $4,175.

INVESTOR'S GUIDE TO SNUFFBOXES

1. Do not buy boxes whose designs have been worn down by long use or whose enamels have been repainted or replaced.
2. Check that a box has the correct marks. *Tardy's International Marks on Silver* and *Tardy's International Goldsmiths' Marks* are handy reference works.
3. Always expect to pay what seems like too much for a really fine box. If present trends persist, it will seem a bargain in a few years.
4. Prices for top-quality boxes have been rising strongly, but for the least good, hardly at all. French gold boxes in the middle price/quality range have been marking time for several years and offer good value now.
5. Auction turnover in top-quality snuffboxes is highest in Geneva, followed by New York, with London in third place. Retail markups are high, so buy directly at auction if you can, or use a dealer to advise and bid for you.

Robin Duthy is the author of The Successful Investor.

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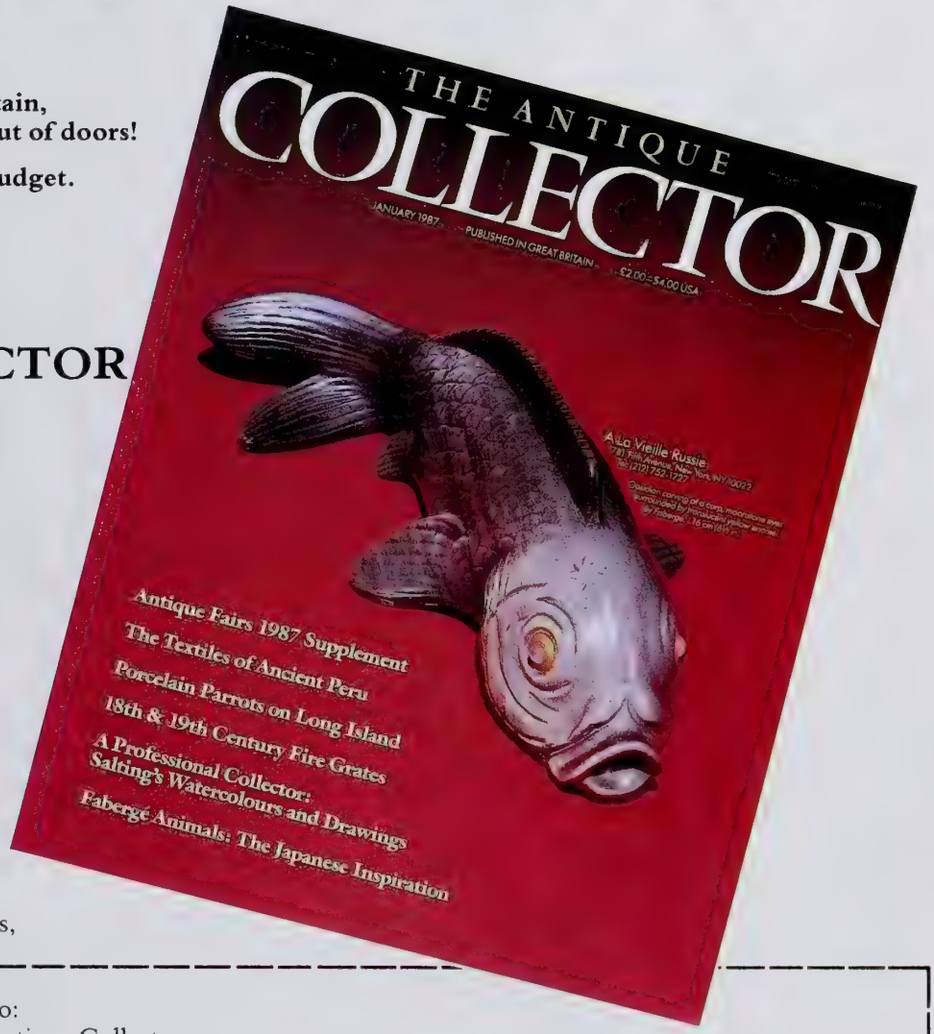

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PLEASURE BEFORE PRESTIGE: OVERLOOKED WINE BARGAINS

BY ROBERT M. PARKER, JR.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY GARY BUSS

Josmeyer Pinot Auxerrois; Conterno Dolcetto; Châteauneuf-du-Pape from Ch. Rayas, Vieux Télégraphe, and Ch. Beaucastel; Josmeyer Pinot d'Alsace.

A survey of retailers' wine racks reveals some startling facts. Their customers have become so maniacal about buying cabernet sauvignons and chardonnays from anywhere that they are missing some of the world's most pleasurable and satisfying wines. While cabernet sauvignon and chardonnay can render stunning wines, the truth is that everyone is trying to cash in on the popularity of these superstars, with predictable results. For example, once past the top two dozen producers of these wines in California, one finds an appalling number of one-dimensional, grossly overpriced wines. The same is true in Australia and France. While the overall quality and complexity of Bordeaux and white Burgundies may be higher than in Australia and California, the [illegible] dollar has sent their prices down. [illegible] When people begin to put pleasure before prestige, the following wines—[illegible] languish on the shelves of retailers at remarkably low prices—will get the recognition and respect they deserve.

ALSACE

Alsace was my first stop in Europe as a visiting student in 1967, and ever since, I have had an incurable fondness for its distinctive, spicy wines. I am amazed by the number of wine drinkers who turn up their noses, unwilling to try some of the world's least-appreciated and longest-lived great white wines. Perhaps because the marketplace is apathetic toward German wines those of Alsace, with their Germanic names, suffer by being confused with them. Alsace, like California, makes matters very simple by naming its wines after the grape variety from which they are made. Most of the white table wines of Alsace are totally dry, though much fuller than one might expect.

The greatest [illegible] are the pinot blancs, which could well qualify as the poor man's white Burgundy or chardonnay. They are crisp, with a mineral, stony fruitiness, and are among the best food wines to be found anywhere. They rarely sell for more than $8 a bottle and will out-age any chardonnay produced in California, often drinking well for seven or eight years. Alsace had a great vintage in 1985 and an even greater vintage in 1983, yet large supplies of the 1983s are still sitting on wine merchants' shelves. If they have been well stored, these wines offer amazingly opulent drinking at bargain prices, since they were bought with a strong dollar. Look for pinot blancs from Josmeyer, the greatest producer of this varietal, who makes three of them. One is a single-vineyard pinot blanc called Hengst; another is called Les Lutins; while the very best made in all Alsace, if not the world, is Josmeyer's cuvée of Vieilles Vignes, which can stand up to many white burgundies. At $10, it is

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Alsace's most expensive pinot blanc.

Other reliable producers include the famous firm of Hugel, which makes a pinot blanc called Cuvée les Amours, and the large firm of Schlumberger, whose pinot blanc is called Princess Abbes. Look for small growers, too, such as Marc Kreydenweiss, Domaine Weinbach, and Willm, whose Willm Cordon d'Alsace is the least-expensive pinot blanc on the market.

If pinot blanc is Alsace's greatest value, the wines least understood are its great Gewürztraminers, which are the best in the world. I have always described Gewürztraminer, with its utterly distinctive character, as a love-it-or-leave-it wine. It is dry yet so packed with fruit as to suggest a touch of sweetness, though in fact there is none. Its spicy, scented character and exotic flavors turn me on, but they may seem a bit overwhelming compared to those of the bland Gewürztraminers of California, Oregon, and Washington. For a gustatory tour de force, look for the 1985s or, better yet, the 1983s from the producers listed below.

No one makes greater Gewürztraminer than the firm of Zind-Humbrecht, from a host of single-vineyard sites such as Hengst, Herrenweg, and Gueberschwihr. Close in quality are the Gewürztraminers from Domaine Weinbach, Kuentz-Bas, Josmeyer (who makes a sensational Gewürztraminer from the Hengst vineyard), and of course the well-known, highly promoted Hugel, whose Réserve Personelle is outstanding as well as long-lived. Good wines are also made by Dopff au Moulin, whose Gewürztraminer from the Eichberg vineyard is sensational, and Schlumberger, who makes two fabulous dry, full-bodied Gewürztraminers from the Kessler and Kitterlé vineyards. The two greatest recent vintages are 1983 and 1985, both still widely available.

No one makes a lovelier Gewürztraminer than Zind-Humbrecht.

THE RHONE VALLEY

The Rhône Valley has long been known for its wine riches, but most wine drinkers seem to prefer young, tannic, grapey Bordeaux or astringent, dense, chunky cabernet sauvignons from California to a spectacular Rhône wine for half the price. While the wines of the southern Rhône Valley, such as Côte Rôtie, Hermitage, and Cornas, have [illegible] and prices have skyrocketed, the northern Rhône still offers sensational value, the greatest of them in Châteauneuf-du-Pape. This is one of France's most privileged appellations because its sunshine, dry heat, and strong winds prevent rot and guarantee that the grapes will develop beautifully. The results are some of the finest, longest-lived, least-expensive red wines in the world. Unfortunately, only a few dozen estates make wine of this quality. There is plenty of bad Châteauneuf-du-Pape tasting like jammy, heavily sugared fruit juice, but the best producers turn out the most sumptuous red wines imaginable—wines for connoisseurs of pleasure rather than followers of prestige.

In spite of the weak dollar, prices for the best Châteauneuf-du-Pape have remained virtually unchanged for five years. Most still sell for $12 to $15 a bottle—remarkably cheap compared with those of similar quality from California and Bordeaux. In 1986 and 1985, the southern Rhône had two stunning vintages. The top Châteauneuf-du-Papes of 1985 represent the juicy, opulent style that must be drunk over the next seven or eight years, while the best of the 1986s are highly structured, rich, and powerful, with harder tannins and higher acidities that call for cellaring of up to twenty years.

The lushest of all is called Château Rayas. At $30 to $35 a bottle it is also the most expensive, and many people pass it up, though one taste explains why it is often a greater joy to drink than the finest red Burgundies. Yet if a *grand cru* red Burgundy were available at the price of Rayas, it would be snapped up within hours. Rayas has made sensational wines in such vintages as 1981, 1983, and 1985.

Less than half the price of Rayas are the stunning 1985 and 1986 Châteauneuf-du-Papes from the following producers: Clos des Papes, Fortia, Vieux Télégraphe, Henri Bonneau, Bosquet des Papes, Les Cailloux, Clos du Mont-Olivet, Cuvée du Belvedère, Cuvée du Tastevin, Domaine Durieu (its 1985 is disappointing, but the 1986 is superb), Grand Tinel, Mont-Redon, La Nerthe, Sénéchaux, and Vieux Donjon. The longest-lived Châteauneuf-du-Pape of all, Château Beaucastel, behaves like a Bordeaux. While it is potentially the finest wine of the appellation in certain vintages, it needs ten to fifteen years' cellaring before it can be drunk.

Great Châteauneuf-du-Pape from these producers tastes of rich blackberry fruit, often raspberries; and the best examples add to these the aromas of saddle leather, fennel, licorice, black truffles, irises, pepper, nutmeg, and smoked meats. I cannot understand why people go on ignoring one of the most spectacular and gratifying red wines in the world.

DOLCETTO

Dolcetto's name suggests *dolce*—sweet—and that has probably kept its popularity down. Yet this dry, exuberant, fruity wine from Piedmont, in Italy, is a most satisfying wine, provided it is drunk young. Its deep ruby-purple color, its bouquet of chocolate, almonds, and crunchy berry fruit, and its soft, generous texture give it a high score on the pleasure meter. It is Italy's answer to the French Beaujolais and is at its best when it is served slightly chilled.

No one makes better Dolcetto than Renato Ratti, one of Piedmont's great wine makers, whose Dolcetto from the Colombé vineyard sets the standard. However, there are other sensational Dolcettos from Bruno Ceretto, Castello di Nieve, Angelo Gaja, Pio Cesare, Aldo Conterno, Bruno Giacosa, Marchesi di Gresy, Valentino, and Vietti. They rarely cost more than $8 a bottle and are tremendous bargains. Dolcettos can be drunk throughout a meal. The greatest recent vintage was 1985, but it has probably been snapped up. The 1986 Dolcettos are less consistent and voluptuously fruity, but the 1987s may turn out to be among the best red wines of Italy. □

Robert Parker, publisher of The Wine Advocate, *is the author of* Bordeaux, Parker's Wine Buyer's Guide, *and* The Wines of the Rhône Valley and Provence.

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GUY BUFFET

At the end of the 19th century France led the world in oyster consumption. Parisians alone gobbled up some six million dozen oysters each year. The great Balzac is known to have regularly ordered five or six dozen as an appetizer! In fact, like bread and butter, oysters became so commonplace that restaurants rarely bothered to list them on their menus.

With his characteristic style and naive charm, artist Guy Buffet recreates a winter harvest of prized Breton oysters on France's rugged northeastern coast. At low tide, under blustery steel-gray clouds, the hardy people of Brittany gather *les huitres* for the tables of Paris, saving, of course, the plumpest morsels for themselves.

"Oyster Pickers" is one of a series of paintings that captures a bygone era better known as *La Belle Epoque.* To order this wonderfully evocative image—or to learn more about Guy Buffet and his other available works—please call toll-free: 1-800-367-8047, ext. 108.

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[illegible] Cover Photo [illegible] by Greenfield [illegible] 1988 [illegible] photograph [illegible] MAREK [illegible] Inc. [illegible] Chinese black and gold lacquer armchair, the seats and panels decorated with [illegible] and prunus blossoms and leaves, ca. 1800, courtesy [illegible] Inc. (Antiques), New York City. Chu Ta, *Lotus* [illegible], late Ming, hanging scroll, medium, ink on paper, size, H: [illegible] cm, W: 89.5 cm, courtesy C. C. Wang Family Collection, New York. Page 11: (top left) Photo, Timothy Hursley; (top right) photo, Patrick Trautwein/Blow up; stylist, Charla Carter; model, Anne Rohart/Zen; hair, Valmer/Mod's Hair; makeup, Anne Berthaud/Mod's Hair; coordinator, Marc Walsh; (lower left) photo, David Hamsley; Chu Ta, *Two Eagles*, late Ming, hanging scroll, medium, ink on paper, size, 90 cm x 185.4 cm, courtesy C. C. Wang Family Collection, New York; (bottom right) photo, Lisa Limer. Page 50: (bottom left) Medium, oil on canvas; size, 76 cm x 110.8 cm; Collection, The Minneapolis Institute of Arts; (top right) Georg Friedrich Kersting, *Caspar David Friedrich on an Excursion in the Riesengebirge*, 1810; medium, watercolor and graphite; size, 310 mm x 240 mm. Page 58: (left) Beatrice Wood, "Double Handled Bowl," 1987; medium, earthenware; size, H: 5¼"; (top right) Beatrice Wood, "Compote," 1987; medium, earthenware; size, H: 12". Page 64: (top right) Porcelain gin dispenser, date, 1700–1740; size, H: 36.5 cm; (bottom right) size, H: 20 cm. Page 96: (top) Medium, oil on canvas; size, 31¾" x 25½"; © ARS, N.Y./SPADEM, 1988; (bottom) medium, oil on canvas; size, 79½" x 55¼"; © ARS, N.Y./SPADEM, 1988, photo, © Sotheby's, 1988. Page 98: (bottom) Medium, gouache; size, 105 cm x 75 cm; © ARS, N.Y./SPADEM, 1988. Page 100: Arita model of a puppy, ca. 1700; size, H: 17.5 cm. Page 102: Map of the world made in Nanking, 1593. Page 104: Medium, oil on canvas; size, 29¼" x 36½". Page 108: Medium, oil on board laid down on cradled paper; size, 21⅞" x 18". Page 140: Anonymous, *Chukei* with flowers (front); flower battle (reverse); nineteenth century; painting (fan) (No); medium, ink, color, and gold leaf; size, 35 cm. Page 141: (bottom) Anonymous, *Jinbaori* with date, family crest, and circles of color, seventeenth century; medium, *kinhame* and embroidery; size, 90 cm x 126 cm; (top) Anonymous, *Portrait of Minamoto Yoritomo*, thirteenth to fourteenth century; medium, polychromed wood; size, 70.6 cm. Page 142: (left) Anonymous, *Kazaritachi* sword mounting with oak-leaf *mon*, seventeenth century; medium, wood, ray skin, lacquer, and copper; size, 101 cm. Page 143: Anonymous, *Oyoroi* armor, Kamakura, late thirteenth to early fourteenth century; medium, iron, leather, lacquer, silk, gilt-metal cuirass; size, H: 33.3 cm. 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Page 158: (top) Hand scroll; medium, ink and color on paper; size, 74 cm x 136 cm; (bottom) detail, hand scroll; medium, ink and color on paper; size, 28.6 cm x 251 cm. Page 159: Hanging scroll; medium, ink and color on silk; size, 105 cm x 162 cm. Pages 168–75: Photographer, Patrick Trautwein/Blow up; stylist, Charla Carter; hair, Valmer/ Mod's Hair; makeup, Anne Berthaud/Mod's Hair; coordinator, Marc Walsh; model, Anne Rohart/Zen; furs, Claude Montana by Birger Christensen; shoes, Stephane Kelian for Claude Montana. Page 179: (bottom right) Three-sided relief, "Boston Throne," Greek, ca. 460 B.C.; medium, marble; size, H: .96 m (center), W: 1.61 m (front), W: .55 m (left wing), W: .73 m (right wing); accession number, 08.205. Pages 180–81: Issey Miyake, 1988; photography by Irving Penn, copyright 1988 by Irving Penn, from *Issey Miyake: Photographs by Irving Penn*, edited by Nicholas Callaway, published by New York Graphic Society Books, in association with Callaway Editions. Page 182: Brocade cloth, courtesy Cora Ginsburg, New York. Page 183: Yellow damask napkin, courtesy Lana Starr–Jean Hoffman Antiques, N.Y.C.; cream coverlet, courtesy Cora Ginsburg, New York. Page 184: Chrysanthemum gravy ladle, courtesy Tiffany & Co.; cut-glass salt and pepper, courtesy Kentshire Galleries Ltd., New York; monogrammed linen napkin, courtesy Lana Starr–Jean Hoffman Antiques, N.Y.C. Page 185: Champagne flute, chrysanthemum fork, courtesy Tiffany & Co.; napkin ring, courtesy Kentshire Galleries, Ltd., New York; brocade cloth, courtesy Cora Ginsburg, New York. Page 186: [illegible]

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all: "what are the nations today where the Byzantine Empire once held sway?' That's where we had to find record of them." A list—comprising nine countries—was prepared by the Menil Collection's curator of medieval and Byzantine art, Bertrand Davezac, who then flew to the Center for Byzantine Studies at Dumbarton Oaks, in Washington, to search through files that are said to contain notes and photographic records of every Byzantine painting in existence. At the same time the dealer Petsopoulos combed the records of the British Museum and the Courtauld Institute of Art.

Hopps knew that once he had uncovered the real provenance of the frescoes, he would need sound and mature legal advice. He turned to the best, a New York lawyer, Herbert Brownell, of Lord Day & Lord, Barrett Smith. Brownell, a former attorney general, under Eisenhower, is a man known to be dedicated to uncompromising morality and ethics.

Brownell advised the foundation to send a simple, clear letter, with photographs, asking for *any* information about the frescoes, to the highest cultural agencies of the nine nations and to their embassies in Washington. "The letters were direct and unambiguous," Brownell states, "to alert the receiver and obtain the facts."

For almost two months it seemed that de Menil and Hopps would never find out where the "Turkish" frescoes had come from. Petsopoulos's searches in London had revealed nothing. Moreover, surprisingly, the archives of Dumbarton Oaks produced no information about the paintings—a lacuna that was especially disturbing since they were obviously of exalted artistic stature. Because of the wait, Hopps became concerned that the purported owner might get wind of the probe and withdraw the objects from sale.

Almost exactly two months after Brownell had sent off his "unambiguous" letters, Lord Day & Lord received a reply from the embassy of Cyprus in Washington stating that the frescoes had been pillaged from a small church dedicated to Saint Themonianos and located in the village of Lysi, in the Famagusta district of Cyprus. The rape and near destruction of the chapel had taken place shortly after the Turkish occupation, in 1974, possibly with the knowledge of the Turkish military. As chance would have it, the chapel, way off the beaten track, had been overlooked by the otherwise punctilious researchers from Dumbarton Oaks.

Once aware of the background of the frescoes and the stark illegality of their removal, Hopps and de Menil entered another anxious period. How could they hold on to the paintings and deal correctly with the Cypriots without making the

Christ as Pantocrator, surrounded by instruments of the Passion, the Dove, and angels.

"Turkish owner" nervous? "There have been disastrous episodes," Hopps points out, "when pirates simply pulverized the goods when they thought the police or Interpol was being informed. These kidnappers are heavy-duty types."

The Cypriot embassy advised talking to a distinguished Cypriot businessman and patron of the arts, Constantin Leventis, a man described as knowledgeable in the methods of art "pirates and kidnappers" who knew how to [illegible] recovering stolen art held at [illegible]. Leventis, in turn, urged the Menil [illegible] to [illegible] Vassos Karageorghis, [illegible] director of the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus. It was Karageorghis who worked out an agreement between the foundation and the Cypriot government and His Beatitude Archbishop Chrysostomos of the Greek Orthodox church of Cyprus, the true owners of the frescoes.

The draft agreement asked board members to approve the funds necessary for the "recovery"—a sort of ransom payment by which the frescoes were returned to the protection of the church—and for an exacting process of restoration, for the frescoes had been flattened upon removal. To request that a board committed to pure acquisition vote funds to recover and repair works of art that would forever belong to someone else raised, as Hopps dryly comments, "a real philosophical issue." Nevertheless, they voted the sum needed. The agreement also stipulated that a chapel be erected on the grounds of the Menil Foundation, in Houston, "allowing the frescoes to be seen and to function in their religious context. . . ." The stunning paintings would be on loan for fifteen years, "subject to periodic review in the future." To put it another way, the Greek Orthodox church of Cyprus owns the frescoes, but they could well remain in Houston in perpetuity.

The restoration process took place in London with the expertise of a British high-tech engineering firm, Ove Arup, along with two special conservators, Carol Mancusi-Ungaro, of the foundation's staff, and Laurence Morrocco. They worked for over three years. The paintings, now returned to radiant condition, will be unveiled this month in Houston at a regional conference on Byzantine art.

The scholars will no doubt praise the Menil Foundation for its historic recovery of raped and stolen art. No doubt, too, the general public—and the devout—will appreciate the foundation's efforts to make the frescoes accessible in an appropriate way. And, one hopes, the entire museum community will note the ethical approach of the Menil Foundation. The key ingredient is absolute honesty—not a bad way to do business, even when it comes to collecting masterpieces. □

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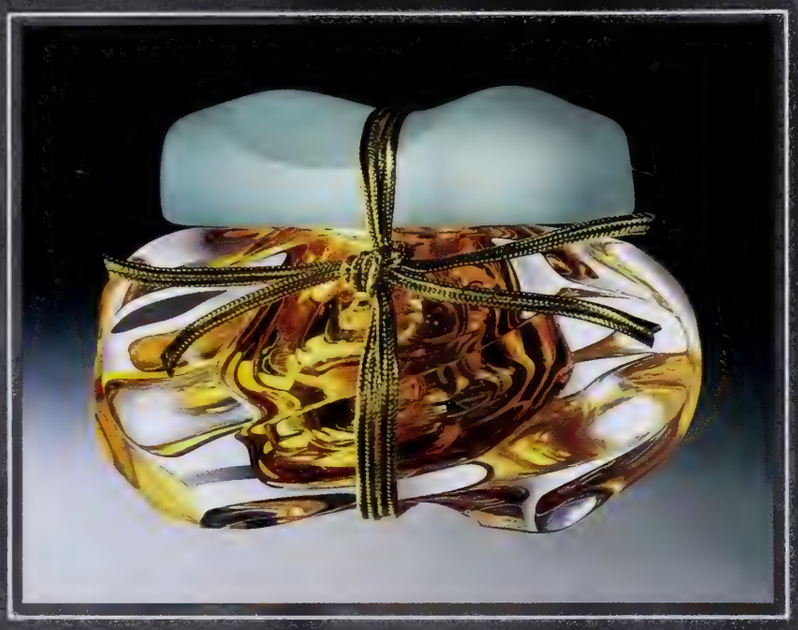

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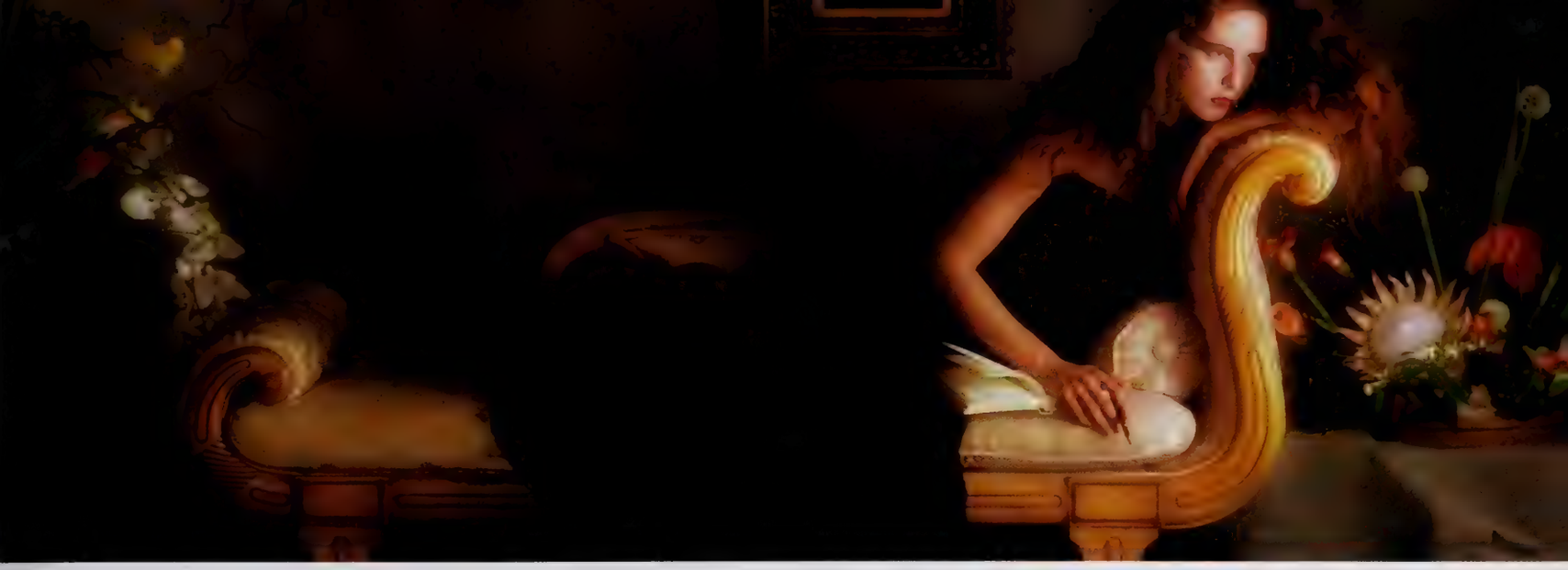

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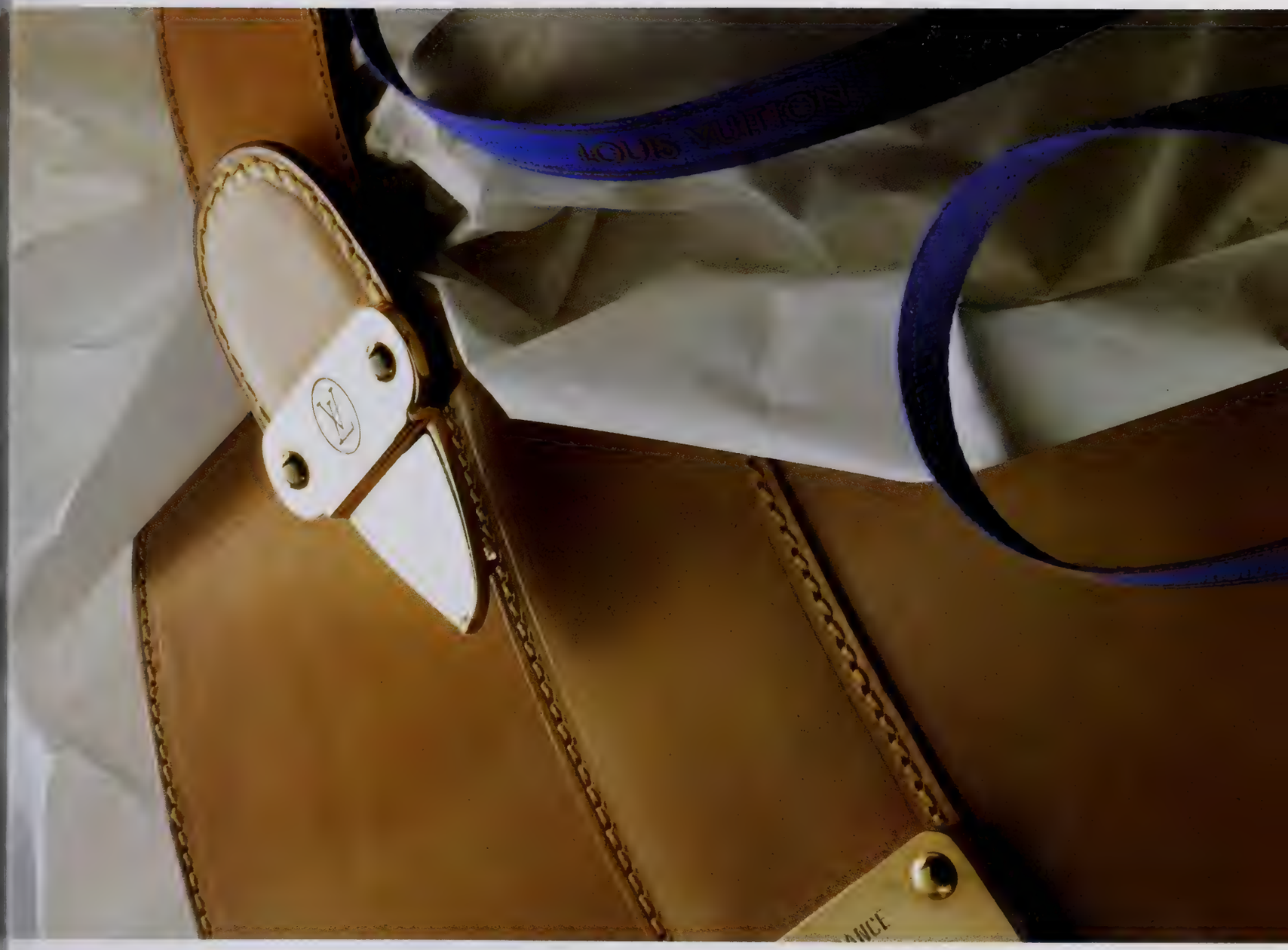

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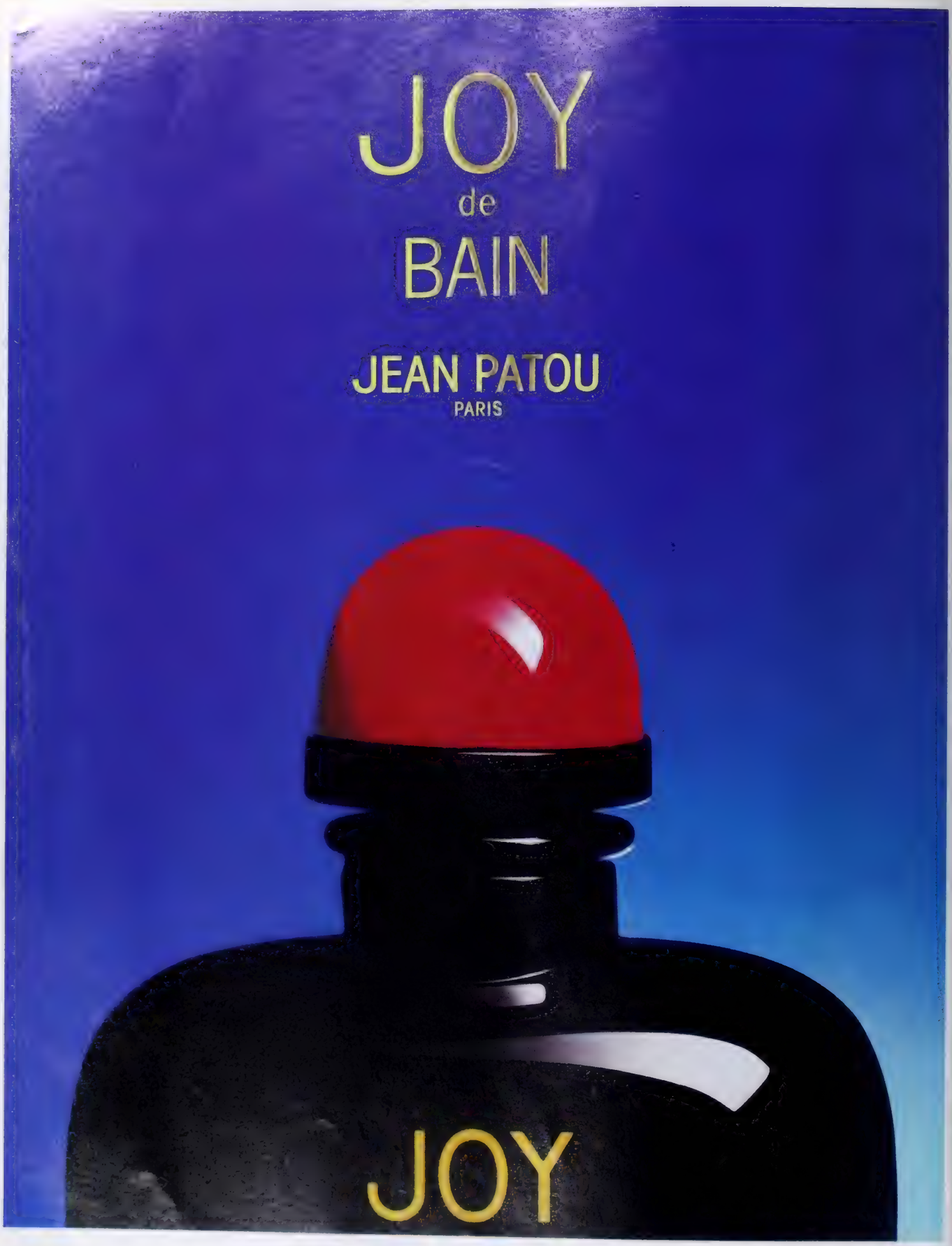

SAKS FIFTH AVENUE

WHAT, MOORE?

At the time of Henry Moore's death, in 1986, his critical reputation had been in decline for the best part of two decades. At eighty-eight, Moore was not only the most famous sculptor in the world but also the most exhibited. Hardly a year went by without some large Henry Moore exhibition somewhere. So much of his work had been seen so often that a profound ennui had set in about it. Admiring Henry Moore had become a chore.

That at least is how it seemed to me and all the other British critics who never failed to give his work a good pasting whenever it turned up. There was so much to dislike: the elephantine vagueness of the late bronzes; the continuing mawkishness of his treatment of the mother-and-child theme; the wide-eyed sheep staring out of his late drawings; the sense of a plodding intelligence at work. Make no mistake, though: Moore thought with his forearms; in that he was a real sculptor.

Were we all wrong? A huge exhibition at London's most prestigious venue, the Royal Academy, is currently aiming to set the record straight. Its ambition is to confirm that Moore really was one of the century's greatest sculptors and not what Picasso said he was, "a negligible *petit maître*." It is a bit ironic that the show should be taking place at the academy, which Moore, like most of the pioneering British artists, refused to join. Moore felt that the academy's record of supporting new art was abysmal, and he never forgave the R.A. president who, in a radio broadcast to the nation after the war, dismissed both Picasso and Moore as "charlatans."

The infamous English class system was another factor in the feud. Moore liked to think of himself as a man of the people, our Henry, the miner's son from Yorkshire. And indeed, if the present exhibition confirms anything, it is that a wholesome, uncomplicated, northern sentimentality lay at the heart of his work.

He begins his career as a student copying sweet Florentine Madonnas in marble. He ends it having reduced the female form to a series of mountainous lumps, hillocks, and gorges. These are the archetypal Moore blobs you find outside banks and town halls the world over. Moore is everywhere. And everywhere, you feel, he is misunderstood. The next time you walk past one of those blobs, try to think of it as a portrait of your mother.

The Moore exhibition confirms what we already knew about early Moore. The thirties was his most inventive decade, and the British Museum was his second home. He mixed various primitive influences—notably pre-Columbian—with lessons about French avant-garde art learned from the magazines. His art was dizzy with discovery. Then came the war.

I cannot think of a major British artist more influenced by the war. It beat the invention out of him, the modernist confidence. Moore started to make conventional, uninspiring, frankly sentimental drawings and sculpture. The mother-and-child theme would not go away. It was as if he were patting his country on the head, saying, "There, there. It'll be all right." He became warm, wholesome—and finally boring.

It was not until the end of his life that the inventiveness returned—in part by accident. Moore was too old and ill to carve directly, so he used to make tiny maquettes in lead and clay, which his assistants enlarged into those familiar megabronzes. The process elbowed the tedious descriptiveness out of his work. For the first time since the thirties, it became surprising. (At the Royal Academy, until December 11.)

—*Waldemar Januszczak*

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When he was good: Henry Moore's pre-Columbianoid *Girl with Clasped Hands* (1930).

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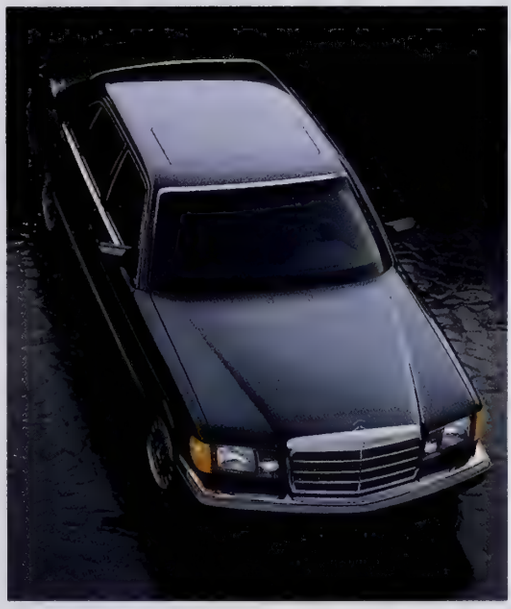

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Once a minimalist, David Gordon is now franchising nationwide.

PETER HUJAR

DAVID GORDON DANCES AMERICA

There is a grandiose sort of accumulative dance work inching its way across the land, and that is the postmodern choreographer David Gordon's *United States*. Actually, it is as much a commissioning concept as a dance work. Different arts presenters, most of them small theaters, buy into the project. Then Gordon, using various local materials (music, poetry, memoirs), creates a dance on the subject of that presenter's region, to be premiered there. He has already done "Minnesota," "New England," and "San Francisco." And what with twenty-seven presenters from Alaska to Missouri to New Mexico, he has plenty to do before the final assemblage is shown, at Washington's Kennedy Center in late 1989. Right now he is working on his hometown, New York; the result will be shown at the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Next Wave Festival, on December 14–17.

These theme dances would seem to represent a new direction for Gordon, who made his name in the sixties as a member of the aggressively analytic avant-garde known as Judson Dance Theater. What is dance? asked the Judsonites. To find the answer, they stripped away subject matter and other theatrical ingredients. Gordon's first piece opened with him standing alone onstage, dropping a bag of rubber balls onto the floor, waiting for them to stop bouncing, and then walking off.

Not just subject and structure but the actual inflection of the dancing was antitheatrical. Judson was famous for using ordinary movement onstage, but nobody's movement looked more ordinary than Gordon's. He had not started dancing until college, and he never acquired "technique." As he has said, "My leg never went up very high, and turning still makes me vomit." So, people did not turn much in his dances. Indeed, they generally moved as if they were walking across a room to open the window.

These early pieces were impermanent affairs performed by ad hoc groups. Eventually, however, the avant-garde to which Gordon belonged outgrew its antic youth. By the end of the seventies, people were either getting out or founding companies and becoming "established." Gordon formed his own troupe in 1978.

He has since done well. He has adapted easily to the "new theatricality" in video and opera, but his best and most characteristic work has been his choreography for his company. *United States* is a good example. The movement, now scaled to ten dancers, is still casual, but out of the seeming disorder rise patterns of beautiful order that sink as others rise. And out of that interplay of order and disorder, together with a score involving Mozart, Tony Bennett, Robert Frost, and others, Gordon's themes emerge: loss, memory, family love, and personal achievement.

Strangely, though, for all its emotional cargo, the dance does not look so different from the hip maneuvers of Gordon's analytic yesteryear. He agrees: "I have begun to think about my work—that it was *always* about something. For a very short time, I tried to fit into a postmodern convention. I admired the people who were able to make abstract work, because it was the most elegant thing I could think of. But I am not that thing called an abstract artist. Time has passed. I've almost come back into style." —*Joan Acocella*

THE LIBRARY IN THE TEMPLE

Imagine a museum that has been built to resemble and operate like a library. In place of shelves full of books, there are paintings, sculptures, tables and chairs, household utensils, and decorative objects, stored chockablock in glassed-in cases (you may "read," but you may not touch). But this is a modern library: each of the objects can be looked up on a nearby computer, which serves as a kind of smart and copiously annotated card catalog. That is the basic idea behind the Henry R. Luce Study Center for American Art, opening this month at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, in New York. It is one of the most important museum innovations in a long time.

Many museums, for reasons of space or

Quaker purity, three aisles to the left: the Met's new American-art study center is for browsers too.

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usually display only a fraction of their holdings. At the American Wing of the Metropolitan, only about 1,000 artifacts have been on exhibit in the public galleries, while about 10,000 items lay in storage. The venerable Met has dealt with its huge lode of unseen American art by housing it cheek by jowl in long, deep glass cases, on a mezzanine gallery, placing thousands of pages of historical information about the collection on a computer system, and inviting the public to come on in and browse.

The Study Center approach to art downplays the great-masterpiece concept of museum-going. Here are whole genres of painting and classes of decorative arts arrayed in an incredibly dense concentration: numerous Windsor chairs in a row, each slightly different; Victorian silver tea sets; Hudson River school paintings; and so on. The mélange is part social history, part a lesson in connoisseurship that guides the viewer toward greater discrimination by way of a large pool of examples. In the multitudinous company of their own kind, single things speak first about their place in the development of their genre and their connection to a historical period rather than about their individual greatness. "This is going to open up our collection to a whole battery of new interpretations," says Lewis Sharp, curator of American paintings and sculpture. "Historians, sociologists, people from all over are going to use the collection in ways we never thought possible."

Among them, no doubt, will be collectors looking to research an area before making purchases, or to compare what they already own with other objects in the same genre. To guide them through the maze of glass cabinets, the computer system has been filled with data about each item in the collection. Accessible by over a dozen terminals, this simple-to-operate digital catalog will spit out up to a page and a half of historical information on whatever piece of American decorative art you choose to look up.

Named for Henry Luce, the founder of Time Inc., and paid for in large part by the Luce Foundation, the Study Center for American Art recasts the image of the art museum more as a reading room of material culture than as the august temple of civilization it usually aspires to be. The Metropolitan's gambit should whet the public appetite for art display as an enlightened form of open storage. —*Edward Ball*

SHAKE, RATTLE, AND ROLL

What you first notice about Simon Rattle when he steps out onstage is his youth and his youthfulness, from the untamable curls of long hair to the flash of a red cummerbund, which has become something of a trademark. He bows to the audience with cocky assurance, and then something astonishing usually happens. Rattle lunges into the earthiest of dug-in string sounds, floats the most ethereal of pianissimos, and strives for the most ecstatic of climaxes. No other conductor of his generation has that kind of authority with a symphony orchestra.

At thirty-three, Rattle has already become one of Britain's leading conductors, and it is old news to hail him as the next Karajan. As principal conductor of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra for the past eight years, he has not only transformed the ensemble from a decidedly second-rate band into one of the finest in Britain, but he has single-handedly revitalized the image of the dowdy industrial town. Through such recordings as a sensational Mahler's Second Symphony, released earlier this year, he has made Birmingham a glamorous name to record buyers and ensured sellouts for the CBSO's tours. Already he has been the subject of a probing biography by a leading London music critic.

Yet Rattle's remarkable success has come on his own terms. While much of the musical world beats a path to his door, Rattle remains loyal to Birmingham. He regularly turns down prestigious posts: in Los Angeles, where he has served as the Philharmonic's principal guest conductor since 1981, he declined the offer to succeed Carlo Maria Giulini as the orchestra's music director. Nor does Rattle, who weights his programs heavily with twentieth-century repertoire, cater to popular tastes.

Rattle is not, however, everywhere as admired as he is in Britain. His early performances in Los Angeles, for instance, were often overwrought and veered out of control, although in recent years his interpretations have grown in power and been better-focused. Rattle goes in for music that takes years to grow into, like Mahler's Tenth Symphony, and his personal, big-boned approach to it can seem pompous to some.

Rattle's highly dramatic style is, however, ideal for opera. It is in opera that Rattle has had some of his most notable successes, although he has thus far resisted both the war-

This month you do not have to go all the way to Birmingham, England, to hear him; Simon Rattle is in L.A. conducting *Wozzeck*.

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houses and the flashier opera houses. Instead, he made headlines by conducting *Porgy and Bess* at Glyndebourne (forthcoming on EMI-Angel). This month Rattle will make his American opera debut conducting the Los Angeles Philharmonic in Music Center Opera's new production of Berg's *Wozzeck*; and that, if anything, is most likely to put the young conductor on the American map. —*Mark Swed*

A GREAT INDIAN TRAGEDY

Salaam Bombay!, a dramatic feature about Bombay street children, is a work of social outrage that transcends its political concerns. The reformism in this film is tempered by an artist's instincts. The squalor in the streets and red-light districts provokes in Bombay's street people a ferocious will to survive. The director, Mira Nair, and her cinematographer, Sandi Sissel, working from a script by Sooni Taraporevala, select their scenes and imagery not only for their power to enrage but also to reveal the human condition. Their revelations bear comparison to those in De Sica's *Shoeshine* and Babenco's *Pixote*. Like those films, *Salaam Bombay!* is about the destruction of innocence. Krishna (Shafiq Syed), a ten-year-old runaway from a traveling circus, comes to Bombay with the mission of earning 700 rupees to buy his way back into the graces of his mother, who rejected him. Immediately he becomes a character in a teeming carnival of myriad pimps, prostitutes, drug addicts, and runaways.

Part ragamuffin, part Artful Dodger, Krishna soon gets the hang of street life, but he is just trying to get by. He has no ambition to rise in the criminal hierarchy, and so he is ultimately defenseless against those far more unscrupulous than himself—like Baba (Nana Patekar), the red-light underlord whose woman, the prostitute Rekha (Aneeta Kanwar), and eight-year-old daughter, Manju (Hansa Vithal), Krishna feels inexorably drawn to. He is also attracted to a young Nepalese girl (Chanda Sharma), nicknamed Sweet Sixteen, who has been forced into prostitution. Her progression from abject terror to bewildered acceptance matches Krishna's tragedy. He cannot save her; he cannot save himself. He is not even fully aware of what he is up against, but we are; and our awareness gives the film a poignancy that is almost unbearable.

Mira Nair's new film, *Salaam Bombay!*, hits some deep, raw chords.

SOONI TARAPOREVALA

Mira Nair, a superb documentarian making her fiction-film debut, filmed in authentic Bombay locations, with a cast chosen partially from the streets. We are never permitted to keep our distance from the sordidness on the screen. But *Salaam Bombay!* is not a sordid experience. Nair is fired by a passion for the world she has put before us, and she allows us to share in not only the squalor but also the lyricism and the gentleness and the generosity. *Salaam Bombay!* may, ultimately, be a tragedy, but its embrace and its depth of feeling are restorative.

—*Peter Rainer*

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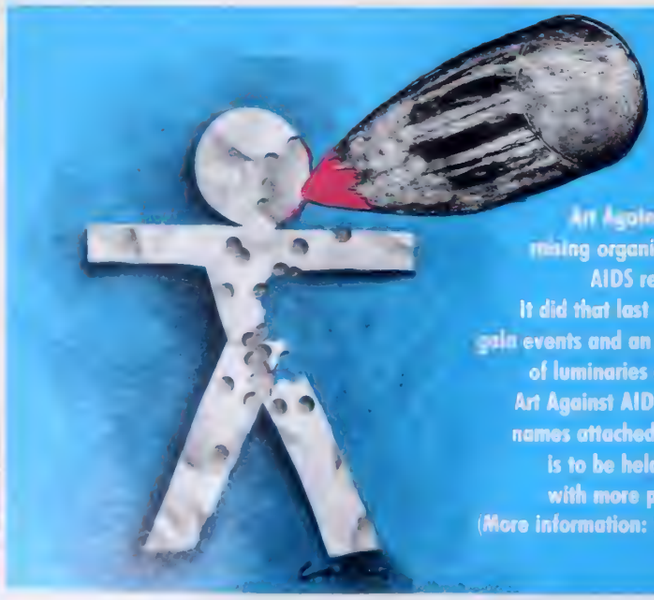
***Rayograph* (1922), in the Washington Man Ray show.**

DADA MAN

André Breton said Man Ray was "the shipwrecker of the predictable," and indeed he sailed through the realms of art upsetting expectations left and right. He made a flat-iron bristle with nails and called it *Le Cadeau* (The Gift); he titled his metronome with an eye on it *Object to Be Destroyed* and then after its destruction recreated it and renamed it *Indestructible Object*. In Paris between the wars he was a kind of brash, gringo version of Duchamp, broaching the issues that would preoccupy artists half a century later: handmade versus mass-manufactured, pure versus mixed media, permanent versus transitory, tradition versus the well-thumbed nose. "Perpetual Motif: The Art of Man Ray," at the National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, from December 2 to February 20, proves that his handbook of avant-garde maneuvers has become the manual to steer by in our time.



Art Against AIDS Goes Bicoastal

Art Against AIDS acts as an art-world fund-raising organization for AMFAR, a major private AIDS research and education foundation. It did that last year in New York with a series of gala events and an art sale, which involved hundreds of luminaries and netted $2.5 million. A similar Art Against AIDS gala and art sale, with big local names attached (David Hockney, Michael Eisner), is to be held in Los Angeles on December 14, with more planned in cities to be announced. (More information: 212-219-8833 or 213-552-6922.)

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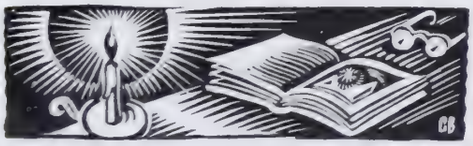
A diamond is forever.

Already in the twenties some critics thought his photographs outshone his paintings. In Paris, he was the first artist ardently involved with the camera—another harbinger of our times—and, under the influence of his innovations, photography became central to both Dada and surrealism. In 1921, he accidentally rediscovered photograms: cameraless photographs made by the placing of actual objects on sensitized paper and the exposing of them to light. He called them Rayographs; the surrealists called them a new kind of art. Later, he also rediscovered solarization, which produces odd shadows and outlines, when his assistant turned on the light in the darkroom after something ran over her foot.

He exhibited negatives, sexual puns, and constructions made to be photographed. His photograph of the marquise Casati had two pairs of eyes because his equipment had blown all the fuses. Crossing easily from art to commerce, he took fashion shots and portraits to earn a living and later claimed that he would say, "I have a wonderful retoucher, madam; how old do you want to be?" He was devoted to confusion, breaking down the distinctions between painting and photography and the boundaries between art and functional objects. He once speeded his Dada constructions through French customs by claiming they were scientific experiments and souvenir fetishes from America. Man Ray continually undermined customs in one way or another; he was, as a dealer later dubbed him, "the Dada of us all."

—*Vicki Goldberg*

LAP ART

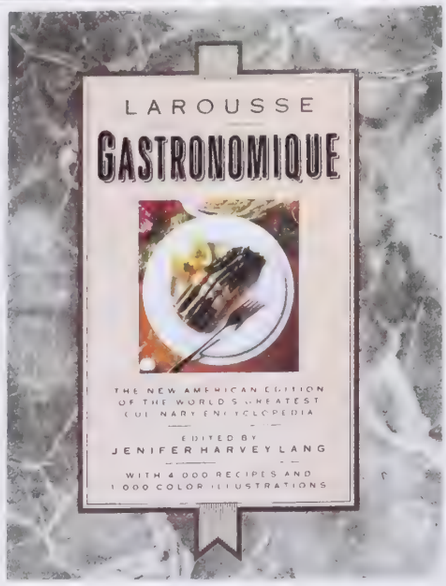


CATHI BLECK

CUISINE'S BIBLE

What is seven dollars a pound, French, and fifty years old this year? The *Larousse Gastronomique* (newly translated and edited by Jenifer Harvey Lang; Crown, $50), first published in 1938. This version of a thoroughly rewritten edition claims that the *Larousse* is "the world's greatest culinary encyclopedia." It might more accurately be called "a French cook's view of the universe."

The emphasis, from *Abaisse* to *Zuppa inglese*, is heavily on France. Indeed, one

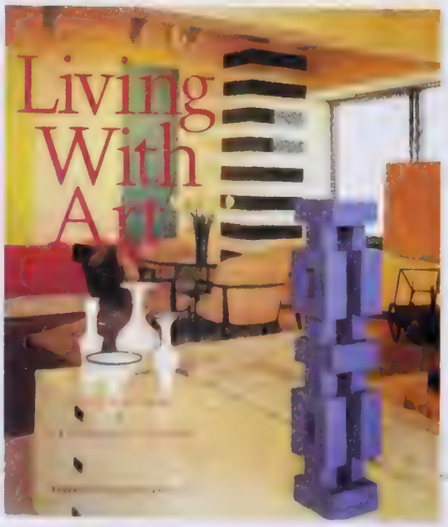


cannot really make full use of the work without some knowledge of "kitchen French": you will find rib-steak recipes under *Entrecôte* and the article on slaughterhouses under *Abattoir*.

But let us not be overly severe; the book remains the most comprehensive treatment of French cuisine to be found in a single volume. We like the authoritative tone of the entries, and if you have ever wondered how rare is "medium" or what a *bain-marie* is, this is the book for you. The new *Larousse Gastronomique* will delight serious cooks and afford hours of culinary Trivial Pursuit. —*Philip and Mary Hyman*

ART, UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

"There's always something to collect," says the painter Philip Pearlstein, himself an inveterate magpie. "One just has to be smart." Or obsessed. Or rich. The dealer Holly Solomon, the critic Alexandra Anderson, and the photographer John Hall show us what twenty-two art collectors (including Mrs. Solomon) have amassed and how they have incorporated it into their domestic "environments." The authors also include a practical guide to what to collect, where to find it, how to display it, how to care for it.



There are some smart collectors in *Living with Art* (Rizzoli, $35). Izhar Patkin, a painter, has turned a loft full of Lower East Side jetsam into an up-to-the-next-minute "Buddhist bodega" for living in. In elegant contrast, another painter, Nabil Nahas, floats his collection of contemporary artworks above a sea of gilt and green-plush Empire furniture. The contingent of obsessed collectors includes Tom Wheelock, who pioneered in bringing the stunning artifacts of Burkina Faso (Upper Volta) to Western attention.

The rich? Alexandra Anderson is right: "Art collecting at the highest level has remained [their] province." More than a few of their "environments" are glamorized takeoffs of the Whitney. The smart and the obsessed will have fun leafing through *Living with Art*, but the tireless and overmoneyed stalkers of the latest status collectible, dazzled by the rich, might well miss the point. —*Charles Bricker*

FROM RUSSIA WITH GILT

When Stendhal arrived in Moscow with Napoleon's troops he was entranced by the beauty of Russian interiors, "decorated in a manner that is striking and elegant, in soft fresh colors and adorned with the finest furniture." *Russian Furniture—The Golden Age, 1780–1840*, by Antoine Chenevière (Vendome, $60), is a sumptuous work of

A table from *Russian Furniture—The Golden Age, 1780–1840.*

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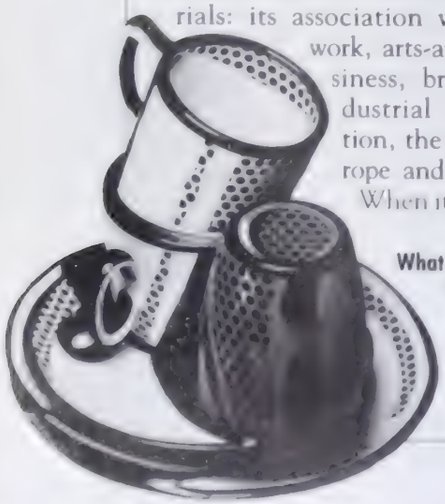
scholarship and an exhilarating introduction to a tradition that the West scarcely knows. There are photographs of desks resembling palaces; of tables inlaid with jasper and malachite, with gilt-bronze mounts, cameos, and ivory galleries; of a chair, well behaved at first glance, down whose arms slither four golden lizards escaping two snakes whose entwined tails crown its back. One stunning tabletop is inlaid with oak, mahogany, Karelian birch, plane, walnut, ebony, and pear, representing in breathtaking perspective one of the vast estates of the Sheremetovs, who in the eighteenth century owned two million acres of Russian soil. The designs are uninhibited and boldly extravagant; the workmanship, impeccable, done by craftsmen trained in the workshops of St. Petersburg. The marvelous Russian marquetry was the province of serfs, who brought the art to unmatched perfection during the long winters. Enrichment is abundant and unembarrassed but never, until the midnineteenth century, vulgar—tapestry, semiprecious stones, ivory, gilt bronze, brass treated like gold, and the unique *verre églomisé* (plaques of painted and gilded glass)—while the colors are those of the sugared-almond palaces that lined the Neva—orangey red, tortoiseshell brown, ultramarine blue, and pale turquoise. That such aesthetic freedom flourished in a repressive state where human souls were bought and sold is a reminder that nothing is simple. —*E.A.*

THE TROUBLE WITH POTTERS

The history of American ceramics reads like a fascinating analysis of a person struggling with an inferiority complex, who, finally, after a century, emerges strong because he has learned to work through his neuroses. Like other arts compromised by their utility, such as photography, ceramics has had to grapple with the inherent contradictions of its tradition and its materials: its association with women's work, arts-and-crafts cuteness, bric-a-brac, industrial mass production, the shadow of Europe and the Far East. When it aspired to fine



What do these contain? Vessel metaphors in Garth Clark's *American Ceramics*.

COURTESY GARTH CLARK GALLERY (2)

art by negating its decorative-arts origins, it was often derivative. When it embraced its functional form (the vessel), it ran the risk of looking sentimental or boring. When it went purely sculptural, it begged the question "Why clay and not bronze?"

What Garth Clark's lavishly illustrated *American Ceramics: 1876 to the Present* (Abbeville Press, $67.50) makes clear is that the best ceramists have been those who have played up (not downplayed) these "failings." They constructed thought-provoking, subversive juxtapositions that both celebrate and defy the "negative" connotations of ceramics. Such artists were the Dalí look-alike George E. Ohr (1857–1918), whose "lyrical, paper-thin, twisted pots" prefigured Funk art in the 1960s and were rejected in his time; the influential teacher Peter Voulkos (1924–), who so wanted to legitimize his art that he finally worked in bronze; the "dirty" Funk artist Robert Arneson (1930–) and his porcelain toilets; the "clean" Pop artist Roy Lichtenstein and his witty, nonfunctional teacups; Viola Frey (1933–) and her tall, painted "figurines" of middle-class Americans.

Clark lovingly chronicles the fits and starts of American pottery making, intelligently pointing out its many ironies and explaining the reactive process by which it has grown into an internationally recognized art. —*Diane Rafferty*

THE IMPRESSIONIST SLEUTH

With the violent transformation that Paris underwent under Haussmann in the midnineteenth century, little wonder that artists turned away from the idealized narrative styles of the classicists and Romantics and started, instead, closely observing life around them. Dark, narrow streets and slum dwellings were replaced with giant boulevards. Light poured in, and so did hundreds of thousands of people from the

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provinces. Cafés multiplied; people took to boating, going to the opera. Such transformations forced a sort of intimacy of strangers. Baudelaire eulogized the *flâneur*, the wandering dandy who mingles with the crowd yet keeps his distance. It was an attitude dear to Renoir, Cassatt, Monet, and others, who became known as the Impressionists.

Robert L. Herbert's *Impressionism: Art, Leisure, and Parisian Society* (Yale, $50) looks to the environmental and social changes rather than to artistic influences as motivating the work of the Impressionists. The beautifully illustrated book reads like a lecture series with slides (it is, in fact, based on a lecture series). By closely examining the way the paintings subtly condemn this new and politically dangerous world (Degas's caricatural suggestion of prostitution in his pretty pastels of ballerinas, Manet's lone cripple in a crowded, joyous street scene), Herbert makes us feel like detectives—exactly the response the artists wanted. —*D.R.*

SAFARI, SO GOOD

Of all the things left to do on this planet, none has more romantic content than the safari. The setting seems close to Eden; the animals are heartbreakingly beautiful and breathtakingly dangerous; the adventurer

COURTESY THE BARTLE BULL COLLECTION

participates in an almost mythic tradition. Anyone interested in such wonders would do well to invest in *Safari: A Chronicle of Adventure*, by Bartle Bull (Viking, $40). A big, thoughtful book, it traces the history of the safari, from the lonely treks in southern Africa of William Burchell in 1811 and Cornwallis Harris in 1836, through the era of the great white hunters earlier in this century, to the conservation-minded sportsmen of today. The prose is lively and anecdotal; the pictures, both gruesome and magnificent.

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"...A Woman Is Only A Woman But A Good Cigar Is A Smoke."

So wrote Rudyard Kipling nearly a century ago in "Departmental Ditties," his famous collection of barracks poetry based on his experiences as a British soldier in the Colonies.

Were Kipling alive today he would not only have to choose his words, but his cigars, more carefully. Today's sophisticated lady, for one thing, might take umbrage at his chauvinism, and alas, the Havana cigars of his day are history. Castro's revolution led to a mass exodus of expert tobacco cultivators and cigar rollers, and with them went a special knowledge which had been passed down through the ages.

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THE GREAT DEGAS PUZZLE

The Impressionists have had their days in the sun with monster shows and prices at auction in the multimillions. Now Degas, who was their friend and colleague though never one of them, is reaping the rewards of the art boom with a blockbuster show and soaring prices. No one would have disdained such "success" more than this aristocratic, aloof, and utterly dedicated artist. A host of books has lately sought to unriddle his perplexing genius. The latest and in some ways the best is *Degas*, by Robert Gordon and Andrew Forge (Abrams, $75), a critical and biographical study, superbly produced and illustrated with many works never heretofore published. Andrew Forge is not only a fine writer but a painter whose understanding of Degas's technical problems and attempted solutions brings us as close as we can hope to come to his creative springs. He was all paradox, an impeccable draftsman who let experiments in pure color lead where they might. His subject was the human figure, and his portraits are the greatest of the century, with their strikingly original, eloquent composition. Yet his final, greatest works are the bathers: faceless, naked female bodies unself-consciously stooping, reaching, climbing in and out of tubs, they have the grave, mortal dignity of antique sculpture. —*E.A.*

AMERI-CAN-A

Canned food is commonly regarded these days as a poor cousin of *real* food, the sort of bland stuff that is good only for recipes with names like Clam Whiffle and Wayne's Mess. Overlooked in that sort of broad-brush, "fresh is everything" condemnation are canned goods that have tasted so good for so long (many of them for decades) that they have become classics in their own way. Here are ten of the worthiest canned treats in America, providing gastronomic experiences above and beyond the Spam-to-fruit-cocktail spectrum. Unless otherwise noted, all are available at groceries nationwide.

Mrs. Fearnow's Delicious Brunswick Stew with Chicken. Burgoo, gumbo, and this stew are classic southern communal public dishes, de rigueur at political rallies and family reunions (in Virginia, Georgia, and North Carolina the stew is a traditional barbecue side dish). This succulent canned version has lima beans, carrots, al dente shoe-peg corn, tomatoes and potatoes, and chunks of chicken, once placed by *hand* into each can. Made by the same firm since the 1930s, when Mrs. Fearnow prepared six cans of the stew and took them to the Women's Exchange. Available in Virginia, Maryland, and Washington, D.C., or call (804) 746-1928.

Broadcast Corned Beef Hash. Garnished with a poached egg, the scratch version (based on savory leftovers) was once the linchpin of the famous Pullman-car breakfasts served on railroad journeys across America. Broadcast's canned version actually tastes *good*, with its shreds of beef and readily identifiable, albeit dehydrated, cubed potatoes. A crispy crust is part of the ritual (use a lightly buttered nonstick frying pan over very low heat).

Ro•tel Tomatoes and Green Chilies. Fresh tomatoes having become for the most part inedible impostors, these canned tomatoes make a surprisingly superior alternative. Ro•tel's

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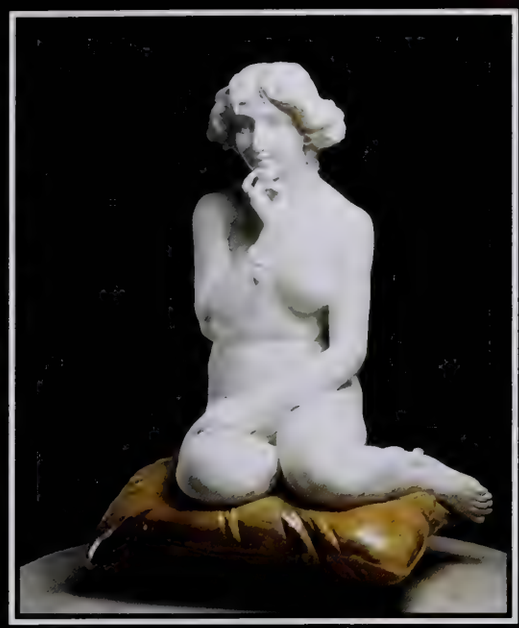

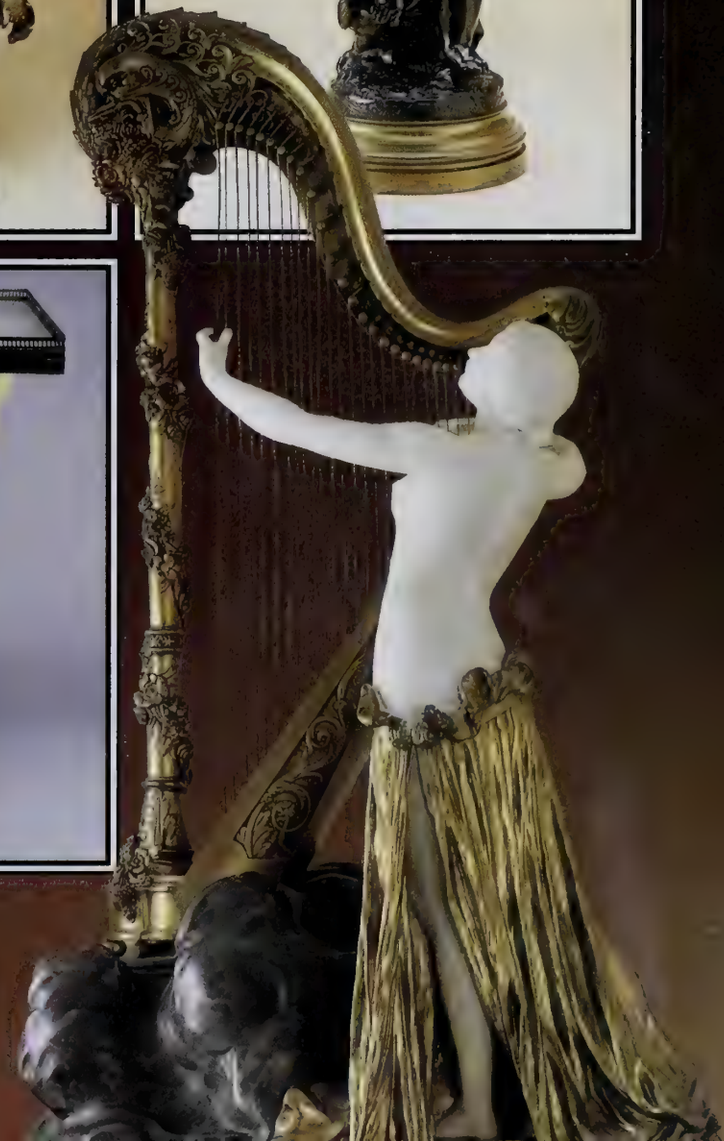

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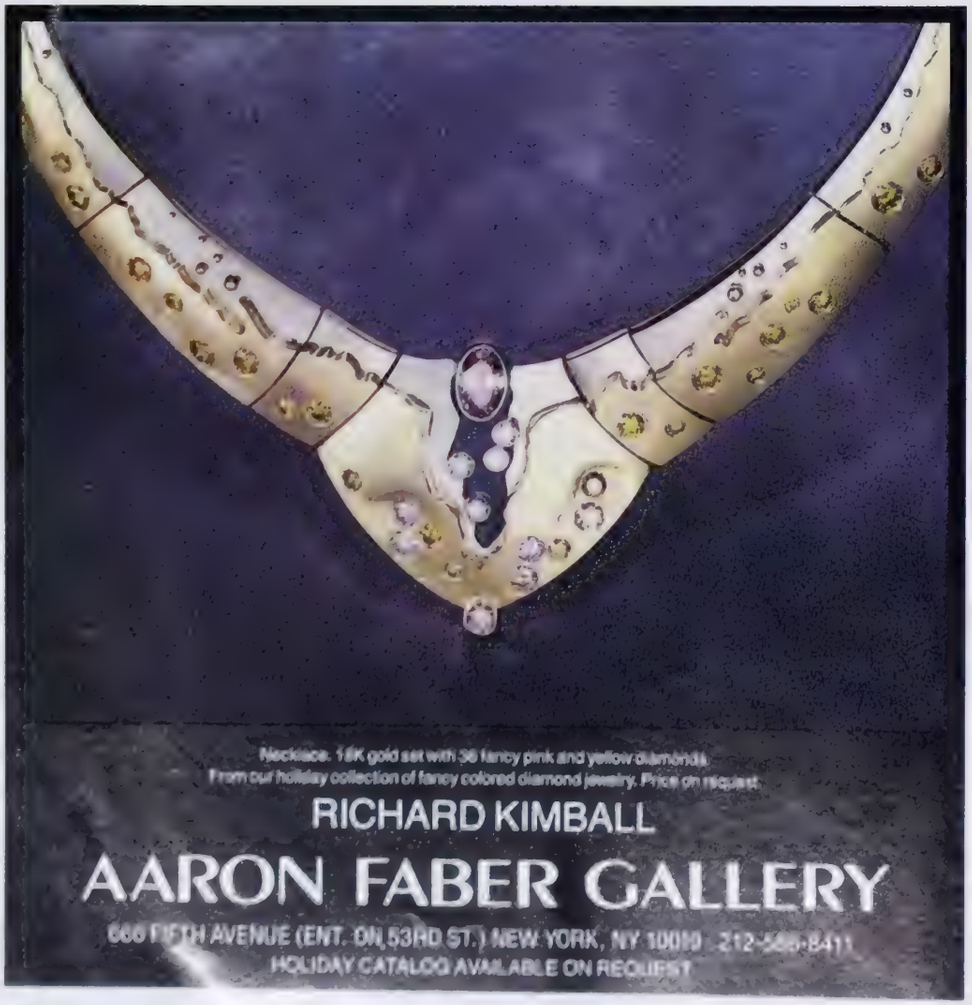

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Le Sueur Very Young Small Early Peas. Even if one never eats these, the can lends an air of opulence to a larder. The label—elegant, silvery, with a fleur-de-lis and glittering gold lettering—is so stunning that wielding a can opener in its vicinity feels a little like participating in the wanton destruction of a priceless canvas. The tiny peas inside wink like jewels. Art for a little over seventy cents a can.

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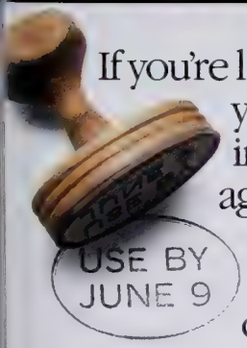

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Woodland Pantry Cream of Wild Mushroom Soup. A lot has been done with, and to, America's favorite soup, condensed cream of mushroom—mostly things best forgotten, like that 1950s suburban one-dish menace Tuna-Noodle Casserole. This is the patrician version *sans* button mushrooms. Produced by the mushroom specialists W. J. Clark & Company of Chicago, it is redolent with the fragrant, woodsy character of *porcini* and wild *champignons*. Mixed with an equal measure of milk or cream, it is good enough to eat as is. Available nationwide in specialty-food stores, or call (312) 421-3676.

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HAVE A VERY TV CHRISTMAS

There is one place left where the holidays deliver on their promise—television.

Music is a seasonal must. Some Luddites still venture out to live concerts. But do they get to see Alvin and the Chipmunks, Dolly Parton, Andy Williams, Kenny Rogers? The Naval Academy Glee Club? Julie Andrews? The Boston Pops? So you're a highbrow Yuletider: this month PBS will give you the folk carolers Peter, Paul, and Mary backed by the New York Choral Society and a forty-four-piece orchestra; Bravo offers carols from the Royal College of Music Chamber Choir (tastefully illustrated with images from the Metropolitan Museum of Art); while the Arts & Entertainment network weighs in with another Anglophilic treat, "Christmas at West-

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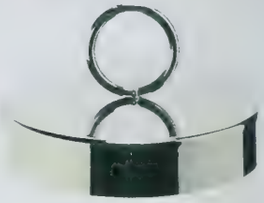

Even unlit, it perfumes the linen closet. Days and days of wonderful fragrance.

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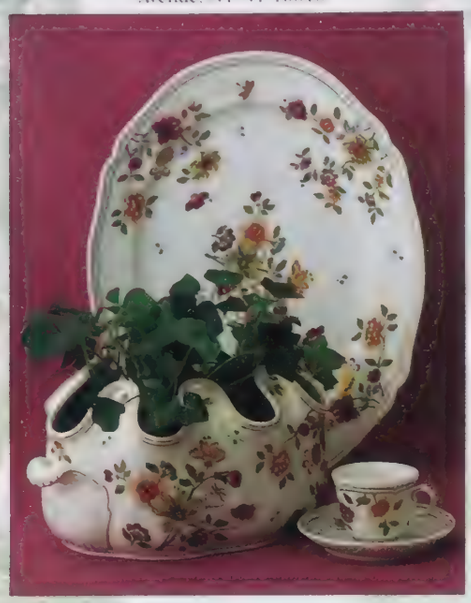

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CATHERINE LAZURE

minster." Throw in such perennial favorites as the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and a few inevitable *Messiahs*, and you've got enough culture to start a yogurt factory.

In December, Jimmy Stewart and Donna Reed crooning "Buffalo Gals" becomes almost as ubiquitous a TV sight as Mort Downey jabbing a thick finger in the face of some cowering liberal. Other seasonal cinematic standards, like *Miracle on Thirty-fourth Street, A Christmas Carol,* and *Holiday Inn* combine to wallpaper the tube with happy endings. Made-for-TV jobs like "The Promise" and "A Gift of Love" update the bathos. Not to mention "A Very Brady Christmas," new this year but sure to become a classic. Finally, there is the granddaddy of holiday programming, WPIX's "Yule Log," twenty-three years aflame and still burning strong, this Christmas Eve and morn in nearly twelve million homes across the country.

—*David Ruben*

* * *

THE STALIN HOUR

FREDERIC LEWIS PHOTOGRAPHY

Keen on meeting the increased demand, the Arts & Entertainment cable network has been programming lots on the Soviet Union. Foremost among these offerings is "Stalin: The Red Tsar," a four-part major biography (by television standards) produced in England and airing weekly from November 14 to December 5.

WITH THE BATHWATER

Great bath takers, the Romans made fragrance an integral part of their elaborate washing rituals. After entering the *thermae*, or bathing rooms, the Roman bather was rubbed with perfumed oils; then he

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FROM THE FORTUNOFF COLLECTION

Add a traditional touch to contemporary entertaining. A pair of candlesticks by S. Kirk & Son, Baltimore, circa 1880. $3,000 the pair. Basket by Bailey & Co., Philadelphia, circa 1850. $2,500. Sauceboat by Jones, Ball & Co., Boston, circa 1850. $1,750. Pepper shakers by A. E. Warner, Baltimore, circa 1840. $900 the pair.

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exercised, had his skin scraped smooth, got a massage, and took a warm-water soak followed by a refreshing icy plunge. The final destination in this five-hour moisture marathon was the *unctuarium,* where rare and costly perfumes were applied in a fragranced rubdown.

All that sweetly perfumed ablution may be impractical now but not impossible to relive in some of its basic aspects. Today's bath fragrances come from two basic sources, the small-scale, craft-oriented company and the international designer-perfumer. Consider the products from The Thymes Limited, a small artisanal operation in Minneapolis that manufactures a bevy of special bath products. Especially noteworthy are the handmade soaps, ranging from simple florals—gardenia, amaryllis, and day lily—to citrus-based blends. These are beautifully wrapped in handmade Japanese rice paper, ribbons, and leaves. The line extends to bath salts and gels as well as bedroom products—drawer sachets, bed pillows, and so on. The Thymes *pièce de résistance,* combining bath and room fragrances, is the Battenburg and Lace Collection.

Fragran

All the major fragrance houses make bath products, but Jean Patou's stand out. In September the French creator of the perfume Joy introduced "1000" de Bain—a soap, foaming gel, dusting-powder, and body lotion—which is probably the most extravagant bath-fragrance collection in the world. The line is based on "1000" de Jean Patou, introduced in 1972, a rich floral fragrance, instantly recognizable by its profuse violet notes, which combines some of the rarest essences available. In the "1000" mix are an exotic Chinese osmanthus and jasmine grandiflorum, a very precious kind harvested at night. Though none of us can afford the luxury of a five-hour thermal immersion, Patou's "1000" de Bain can be our modern version of the ancient ritual. —*Jill Resnick*

Edited by Robert Knafo

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COURTESY CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK

Just the thing under the tree: a rare tekke-bird *asmalyk*, at the Christie's sale of Oriental rugs and carpets, December 6.

All the holiday catalogs arriving almost daily at this time of year are reminders that, by cleverly placing order bids, you can turn the auction world into a sort of private, do-it-yourself version of the famed Neiman Marcus catalog. However you take advantage of the myriad end-of-year auctions, here are the sales and items that ought to be considered for the art-and-collectibles section on your holiday wish list.

Sotheby's and Christie's inaugurate the month with their big-time, big-bucks **American painting** sales, on the first and second, respectively. I suppose overall Sotheby's may have an edge in the more formal, mid- to late-nineteenth-century material, with works by Chase, Hassam, Hyade, or Ferris. But Christie's has pulled down another significant corporate collection, that of the Clabir Corporation of Greenwich, Connecticut, which features more than two dozen American Impressionist and related works.

I can do no more than mention that Christie's (on the first) and Sotheby's (on the seventh and eighth) will hold their semiannual major Oriental sales. The more focused, **fine Chinese ceramics and works of art** sale, at Christie's, is built around Han, northern Wei, and Tang material as well as some brilliant archaic bronzes from a Far Eastern collection.

On the ninth and tenth Christie's has two New York sales in fields we have not much covered for a while: **important twentieth-century decorative arts** and **architectural designs and commissions.** The former features a naughty, life-size lacquered panel of 1927 depicting Josephine Baker, one of six such panels by the important Parisian art deco craftsman Jean Dunand.

COURTESY SOTHEBY'S NEW YORK

Will this early El Greco leapfrog its estimate?

Sotheby's and Christie's hold their semiannual major **Oriental carpet and rug** sales in New York on the third and sixth of this month, respectively. The Sotheby's sale is huge—more than 250 lots—and built around key collections, such as the fifteen classic, room-size Persian carpets from the Boone estate and the tribal rugs from a midwestern collector. The star of the Christie's East sale should be a tekke-bird *asmalyk,* a ceremonial Turkoman camel cover, in a design so rare that there are only twelve known examples (estimated at $25,000 to $35,000).

There will be a strong flurry of activity in several major Continental markets early in the month. From the first to the third, Christie's Rome features **jewelry, silver, and watches.** Later in the month, on the twelfth and thirteenth, there will be sessions of **old-master and nineteenth-century pictures, drawings, prints, and engravings.** In Monaco on the fourth, Chris-

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COURTESY CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK

Charming Prendergast at the Christie's American painting sale, December 2.

tie's has its usual semiannual surfeit of largely **French old masters,** exquisite **French and Continental furniture, objets,** and precious **French ceramics.** On the seventh and eighth at the Westbury Hotel, Habsburg, Feldman will hold its first full-fledged sale in New York, of **clocks, watches, and jewelry.**

Anyone who has attended the **annual Christmas-gifts auction** at New York's William Doyle Galleries, this year the night of the seventh, can tell you (although they'd probably rather keep it a secret) what a treasure trove of small, portable *objets* it is—most of which will likely sell for less than $500.

There are ample reasons to extend one's holiday-gift search to the London sales. On the first and second in London, Sotheby's will offer **illustrated and children's books,** a sale that features a very special American collection of some 350 books, most in mint condition and of great rarity, ranging from the first English edition of *The Pied Piper* (1605) to first editions of *Huckleberry Finn* and *The Wizard of Oz.*

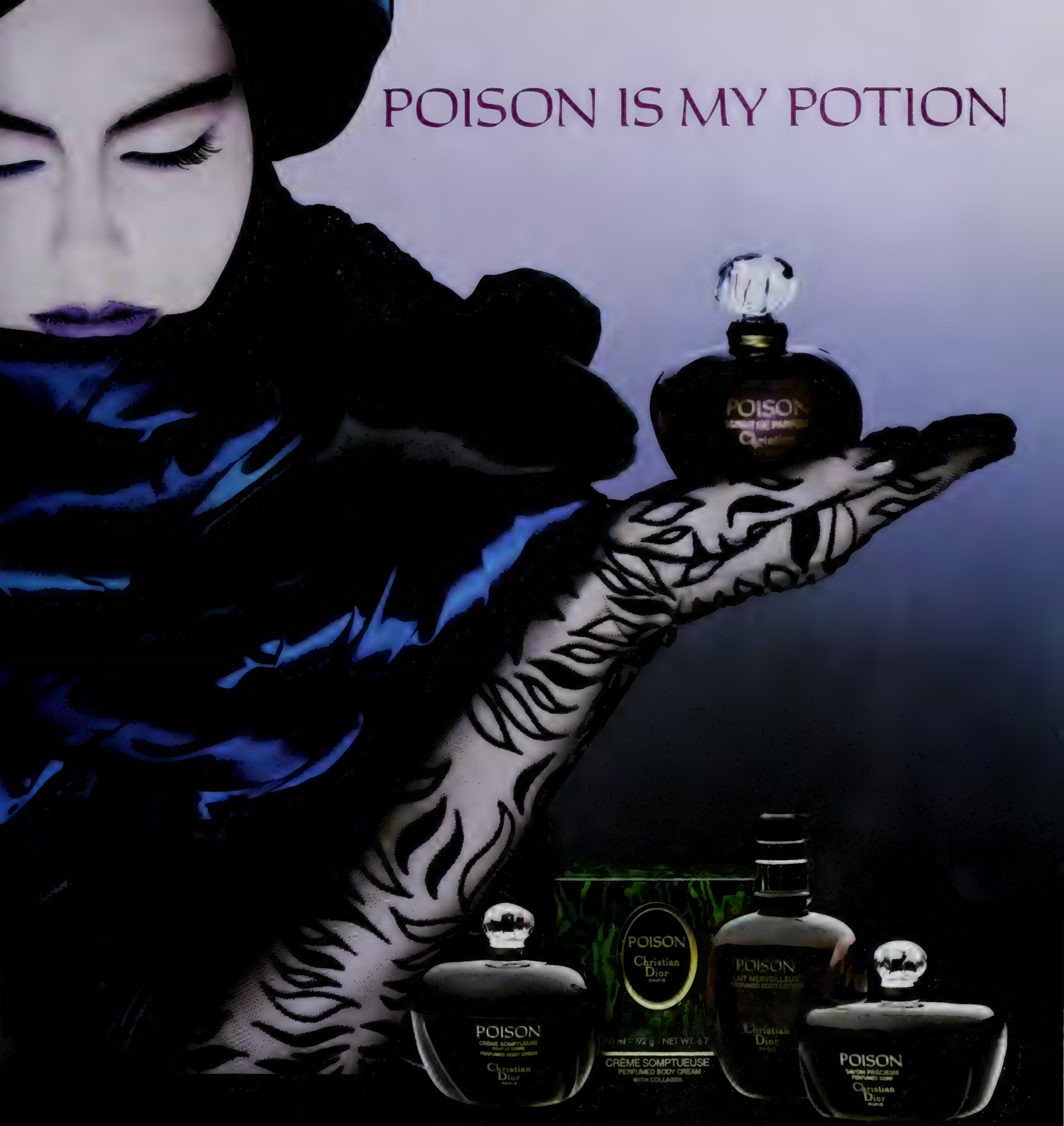
On the sixth, the Christie's South Kensington sale of **picture frames and artists' materials** offers splendid opportunities for one-of-a-kind-gift buying. On the evening of the seventh, Sotheby's London will present a session of **old-master paintings.** The sale, built around a group of paintings from the collection of the late South African mining millionaire Sir Joseph Robinson, features such luminaries as Fra Bartolommeo, Frans Hals, Pieter de Hooch, Paulus Potter, and Jacob van Ruisdael. But suspense centers on the fate of an early, atypical *View of Mt. Sinai* by the redoubtable El Greco.

In New York on the fourth, Sotheby's will be out to prove that lightning *can* strike twice in the same place, in a sale the wags have dubbed "Son of Warhol." It is almost too much to believe. Workmen preparing to remove file cabinets from Warhol's New York town house were astonished to discover, crammed into the hollow space beneath the bottom drawer of the top cabinet, dozens of unmounted gemstones, designer jewelry, and watches now estimated at more than $1.2 million. A visit to this sale could provide the ultimate Christmas present this year.

If your tastes run toward the fantastic more than the precious, take in the Sotheby's **fine books and manuscripts** sale on the fourteenth, where a somewhat uncharacteristic lot may take the day. Imagine owning Orson Welles's own, actual, marked-up manuscript text of the notorious "War of the Worlds" radio broadcast of 1938, which purported to be live reportage of a successful Martian invasion and practically caused a national panic.

Then there's always the question of what to give the incorrigible old curmudgeon on your gift list. Well, here's just the thing. On the seventeenth, in New York at the Sotheby's semiannual **Collectors' Carousel,** weighing in at an estimate of $30,000 to $50,000, is the actual hat that Margaret Hamilton wore as the Wicked Witch of the West in *The Wizard of Oz.*

—*James R. Lyons*



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FROM ASIA WITH LOVE

BY CORINNE K. HOEXTER

Last fall, a blue-tunicked singer from the People's Republic of Mongolia, newly recognized by the United States, stood on the stage of the intimate Lila Acheson Wallace Auditorium, at the Asia Society in New York. Davaa Tserendavaa gave, according to Robert Palmer of the *New York Times*, "spellbinding demonstrations" of *khoomei*, harmonic singing in which the performer simultaneously vocalizes a low-register drone and a high, fluting melody.

As the applause at last ebbed, a group headed backstage, led by a handsome, ebullient woman with distinguished cheekbones and the elegant carriage and high-piled hair that suggest a former ballet student. Beate Gordon, the director of the performing arts, films, and lectures at New York's Asia Society, burst into the greenroom, flung open her arms, and cried, "You were all wonderful!"

Among those congratulating the performers were the experimental artists Elliott Sharp, a guitarist-composer with a percussion group called Carbon, and Meredith Monk, a singer, composer, and filmmaker, who were scheduled to appear shortly in the Next Wave Festival, at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. Though both Sharp and Monk profess to have been influenced by *khoomei*, they had never before heard it sung by its native interpreters. "It's a matter of tuning the cavities in the skull," Sharp observed. "Once you hear the right sounds, it's like riding a bicycle—you know when you've got it, and you never forget." But even for those born into the tradition, it does not come easy. "When I first learned to sing *khoomei*," Tserendavaa told him through an interpreter, "my throat was sore for three years."

A *real* Bengali Chhau dancer—in velvet, not silk.

Unusual as their appearance was, the Mongolian musicians and dancers had simply become the latest in a long series of Beate Gordon's discoveries. Her job—"the most interesting in the world," she calls it—is largely her own invention. In her eighteen years at the Asia Society, she has commuted across the Pacific the way financiers commute to Westchester, bringing thirty-five troupes from thirteen countries to tour over 450 North American cities. She is receptive to emerging art forms, but above all she aims to track down those practitioners of vanishing, pure Asian art forms least adulterated by the global language of Hollywood films, television, and Western music.

PHOTOGRAPH BY BOB WAGNER

Beate Gordon commutes to Asia the way financiers commute to Westchester. Her goal: to bring back art forms untainted by Hollywood.

Despite her air of a grande dame from the Old World, Gordon has the curiosity of the born explorer. Prospecting for new wonders, she has crossed monsoon-swollen rivers and driven through 114-degree heat in west Bengal. She has presided in a sarong over the revels of former headhunters in a longhouse in Borneo. She has endured freezing nights in a Mongolian yurt and, fighting off altitude sickness, lugged canisters of oxygen to auditions in Lhasa, Tibet. She has awakened at three A.M. on a mat in a forest hut in Purulia to the sound of drums and risen to watch the primitive Chhau dancers emerge by torchlight from the total darkness that is all but banished from our modern world. Amid the flickering shadows she has seen their vigorous reenactments, in mime and martial arts, of the tales of gods and heroes from the *Ramayana*.

Once Gordon has sighted her quarry, often her hardest task is convincing the local officials that Americans want the original, undiluted versions of their classic dances. Well aware that they usually do not really believe her, she always returns for the dress rehearsal to be sure they have not slipped in any "improvements." The false notes she has rejected take many forms. On one occasion, she was confronted with a huge ensemble singing a

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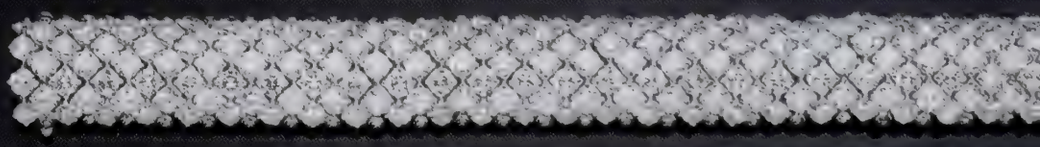

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Mongolian love song meant for two. On another, she found the Chhau dancers not in their authentic, plain cotton costumes or in velvet but in overly refined masks and gorgeous silk robes a maharaja had made for them after a trip to Paris in the 1920s.

Gordon looks above all for "simplicity, control, and understatement"—hallmarks she finds equally in the classic Asian performing arts and such influential modern forms as *butoh*, the tradition-rooted avant-garde dance technique from Japan. Philip Glass, a sometime visitor and guest artist

CHRIS MAYNARD

Gordon backstage with Indian Kathakali dancers.

at the Asia Society, is one of many American artists striving in ways of their own for these same qualities. The society's commitment to what Glass calls "the right context and atmosphere for seeing and understanding Asian performing arts" provides unique stimuli for Western creativity. Another distinguished visitor, Martha Graham, was so exhilarated by the Tibetan opera music and dance troupe Gordon brought to America that she wanted, she said, "to get up on the stage and dance with them."

From Beate Gordon's corner office on the sixth floor of the Asia Society building, designed by Edward Larrabee Barnes, in 1981, phone lines go out around the country and across the Pacific to twenty-two countries of Asia. The air crackles with a sense of constantly erupting crisis. The managers of touring companies will seek help with disasters ranging from the loss in transit of irreplaceable instruments to the heart attack of a Kathakali dancer in Boston. Requests arrive for a performance in Portland, Maine—or Oregon—by one of a stable of Asian artists based in the United States, perhaps an Indian dancer or a Beijing opera star.

Gordon and her staff take it all in their stride, at the same time holding open house for touring artists from Tokyo or Brooklyn who may drop in at any time. "Hello, how *are* you?" she calls in unfeigned delight as a small, middle-aged Japanese woman with a self-contained air stands in the door, and then drops briefly into Japanese. Introduced as Suzushi Hanayagi, the visitor suddenly smiles, holding out a box of cookies, whose buttery scent—like Proust's madeleine—wafts Mrs. Gordon back to her Viennese childhood. "Don't you just love them?" she says, offering the cookies to everyone in sight.

She explains that she has known Hanayagi for more than twenty years as a dancer in the style called *jiuta-mai*, an intense, concentrated traditional Japanese dance performed in private parlors. When Robert Wilson and David Byrne were looking for a choreographer for the "Knee Plays," she showed them tapes of Hanayagi, and they wanted her to come to Minneapolis to work with them. Reached in Tokyo, Hanayagi was dubious. "You must go," Gordon told her. "This is world-class." So, finally she did go, won the New York dance community's Bessie award for her choreography, and is now at work on several other Wilson projects.

Gordon, meanwhile, proceeds with planning the major tours and the calendar of events that fill Mrs. Wallace's plush little theater each season: a film series from Sri Lanka or Korea; a conversation with David Henry Hwang plumbing the ambiguities of *M. Butterfly*; a workshop or a performance by a leading exponent of *butoh*; a concert of the Balinese gamelan or the Chinese bowed fiddle called the *erhu*—or one by the modern Japanese saxophonist-composer Ryo Noda. This autumn saw the

JACK VARTOOGIAN

The painted actors of the populist Kathakali enact gods of ancient myth.

first American tour of *Namsadang* (farmers' festival music), a carnival-like entertainment growing out of traditional Korean harvest rituals, featuring the virtuosic drummer-dancers called *Samul-nori*, masked dance-drama, puppet plays, and a kind of acrobatics. Broadening the horizons ever further, Gordon organized an Australian festival (concluding this month), in which a contemporary chamber group called Terra Australis served as counterpoint to an ancient ritual performed by aborigine sand painters, previously seen abroad only in Paris. Most of their paintings are too sacred to be created before any audience—least of all before a woman. But having chosen one that was sufficiently secular, for twenty-four hours spread over two days they chanted one of their mythical song-stories, while executing the image with pulverized termite nests on the Lila Acheson Wallace stage as the

A Chhau dancer as Ganesh: a Gordon import.

COURTESY OF THE ASIA SOCIETY, NEW YORK

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audience came and went. When the work was finished, they danced on it to destroy it, as their tribal laws demand.

Born in Vienna, fluent in Japanese, Beate Gordon has lived a life as extraordinary as her job. In 1929, when she was five, her father, the pianist Leo Sirota, was invited to teach at the Imperial Academy in Tokyo and settled his family there via the Trans-Siberian Railroad. Little Beate learned to speak the language of her new country in three months.

In 1936 her parents took her out of the hated Prussian school, where Nazi ideology was by then enshrined, and returned to Vienna for six months of cultural refreshment. Then it was home to Japan, where she had to enroll in the American school, known to the Germans, because the American girls dated and wore lipstick, as "Sodom and Gomorrah." She breezed through, graduating in 1939 and enrolling at Mills College, in Oakland. She became an American citizen in 1942.

When Pearl Harbor cut her off from her parents, she used her knowledge of Japanese (shared in the United States by only sixty Caucasians) to support herself. First she monitored Japanese broadcasts for political and military information. Later she wrote programs for the Office of War Information directed at possibly war-weary Japanese servicemen. "I," she remarks, "was Tokyo Rose in reverse."

As soon as the war ended, she returned to Japan. In a Tokyo leveled by bombs, she could not find her house, but through a radio broadcast she traced her parents, half-starved and half-frozen, to their summer villa in the mountains. As a member of MacArthur's army of occupation, she was assigned to work on the draft of a dem-

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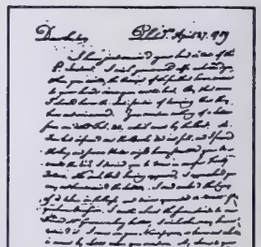

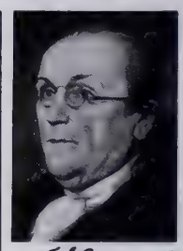

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SOTHEBY'S
FOUNDED 1744

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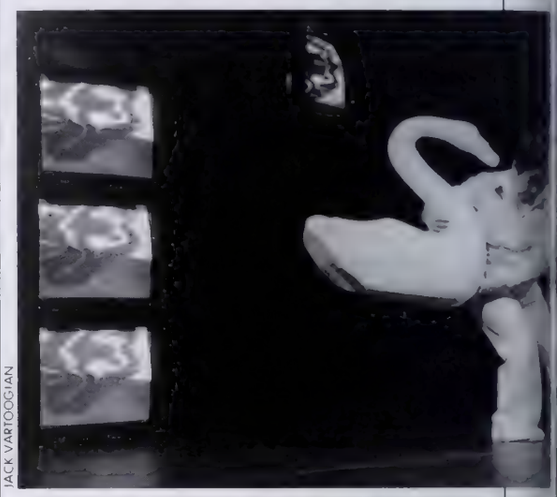
ocratic constitution for the Japanese and specifically on the civil-rights section. Being the only woman in the group, she



JACK VARTOOGIAN

Hanayagi: a Japanese dancer beyond tradition.

assumed responsibility for the women's-rights provision of the Japanese constitution. "Even Lillian Hellman," says Gordon's friend Dick Cavett, "couldn't have fabricated such a life for herself."

After returning to New York, in 1947, she married Lieutenant Joseph Gordon, who had been her colleague in Tokyo. The couple have two children—Nicole, thirty-four, a lawyer, and Geoffrey, thirty, a playwright and novelist. Beate spent the early years when they were growing up as an adviser to Japanese students. Next, she worked as a part-time performing-arts director for the Japan Society, and then for the Asia Society. In 1970, a grant from Mrs. Wallace allowed the Asia Society to hire its first full-time director of performing arts, and Gordon felt ready.

Recalling her earlier adventures, Gordon reveals how great a role serendipity has played in her successes—and how hard she has had to fight to prevent them from turning into show biz. "Was it in seventy-four? On a street in Rangoon I came across this school—the minister of culture hadn't even thought to show it to me. I discovered that the Burmese have a whole system of dance exercises—there were 103 for the boys and 104 for the girls. Here was something absolutely authentic. I felt as I've always felt when I see Martha Graham's exercises. They were an art form." Her voice recaptures the delight of discovery.

"The officials were naturally amazed that I wanted such a thing, but I finally convinced them. Then, when I came back the next year to check the rehearsal, they showed me something elaborately choreographed and costumed. I had seen them do

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it in their simple sarongs. Of course I insisted that they go back to the original patterns and sarongs. And this exhibition was the hit of the evening."

"Naturally I got in touch with Miss Graham, who has always been interested in Asia. She arranged this wonderful evening at her school," Gordon continues. "First the Burmese came out and did their exercises in a flowing manner that looked completely effortless. When the Graham dancers came out in their flesh-colored tights, they looked like giants, overpowering next to the small Burmese. Suddenly it hit me; you couldn't miss it. The audience was amazed by this contrast between the

JOHAN ELBERS

The Korean Sin Cha Hong at the Asia Society.

quality—almost spiritual—of the East and the physicality of the West."

Such insight has informed Beate Gordon's whole life. "The economic future lies in Asia," she says. "As interest in Asia spreads among Americans, they may also come to recognize the affinity between the distinctive qualities of Asian art and those that many American artists are seeking."

Meanwhile the search continues. Already plans are under way for Gordon to go to Siberia to look for dancers and musicians who have held to their traditions. If she finds another uncut gem, it will be brought to the Asia Society next spring, as well as being shown in the first jointly curated Soviet–North American exhibition: the Smithsonian's "Crossroads of Continents: Cultures of Siberia and Alaska." Whatever she finds, American artists, both known and unknown, not to mention a growing audience of devoted fans, will be watching for the new lights Gordon beams on our own life and culture. □

Corinne Hoexter, formerly executive editor at Asia, *writes on travel and culture.*

He stood motionless by the car door.

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There was a lovely vision of her in the window and he didn't want to break the spell.

He had cancelled a meeting in Brussels and flown halfway across a continent to be with her for one evening. It was the kind of thing he said he would never do.

But now, as he saw her face bathed in the soft light, it all seemed worth it.

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And when they are bad...

The worst and the best waiters of Paris

By Justine De Lacy

Many foreigners' first brush with European superiority and arrogance takes the form of an encounter with a French waiter.

There is no service with a smile in France, because if a Frenchman is serving someone—something *la Révolution* promised he would never have to do again—he has no reason to smile. (The disgruntlement of those who still serve is the result of one of history's grand misunderstandings. Some of the mob demanding bread

Illustrations by Steve Brodner

apparently mistook Marie-Antoinette's condescending remark "Let them eat cake" for compassion, assuming she meant something along the lines of "You will all soon live in a palace and eat cake like Louis and me." Those who got the queen's drift lopped off her head, of course; the rest continue to feel disinherited.) Anyone who owns or consumes something in France today is considered to be depriving someone who does not or is not. Example: a person standing regards a person sitting as having taken what is rightfully his—the seat—and he is out for blood today just as he was in 1789.

The garçon's motto is "Since I can't afford an expensive meal, I will ruin yours." Habitués soon realize that there are *règles du jeu* operating in Paris restaurants that, while observable in many countries, have become a high art here.

Rule 1: The customer must never be given the table he requests. The more unpleasant the table, the greater the likelihood that the customer will not return or will leave immediately, and the garçon can get back to his main preoccupation—deciding which horse to play in the *tiercé*.

Rule 2: Money does not talk. The customer's illusion of having certain rights because he is parting with cold, hard cash is quickly dispelled. The fact that the garçon is paid to bring the customer food is regarded by him as a bizarre coincidence.

Rule 3: The garçon smiles only twice: when saying his favorite word, *non* ("*Mais non!*" "*Jamais!*" "*Impossible!*" "*Pas question!*"), and when watching the customer read his bill. *Oui* is his Waterloo. If the answer is yes, the garçon will respond in the conditional—"*Si l'on veut*" or "*Ça pourrait l'être*"—rather than undergo the defeat of acquiescing.

The garçon comes in four basic models:

The Director. The restaurant is a stage to this frustrated *homme de théâtre;* the customer, a stagehand who has strayed onto the set. Obey him, and you may get a part.

The Professor has inherited the French mission to civilize. The customer is Rousseau's noble savage and must be instructed in life's finer points. It hurts him more than it hurts you.

The Warden subscribes to the fundamental French belief that people are guilty until proven innocent. He knows that you plan to make off with the Pernod water carafe and the Ricard ashtray and sell them to New York antiques dealers. His dictum: the customer must be watched.

The Proprietor regards the cafe tables and chairs as well as the sidewalk on which they stand as his personal property and

Go to the Restaurant de l'Ile St.-Louis Twice, and you'll be entertained more ftle by yvon.

therefore feels victimized the minute you sit down. Regardless of how much you are paying for the privilege, to him you are an interloper whose impertinence must be punished. Shift your table or chair, and out he darts like a rat from under a ledge to jerk them—and you—back into line.

Many foreigners assume that only they are seated downwind of the Turkish toilet or sneered at for ordering tap water instead of Evian. But democracy, in France—*Vive la Révolution!*—means that everyone is treated equally badly.

When I arrived in Paris, at age nineteen, I was enthralled with the elegance of the city's *garçons de café,* with their crisp white aprons and snug black vests featuring pockets for different-size coins. (How organized I would be with one of these vertical filing cabinets for the chest!) I was amazed at the alacrity with which napkins were snapped around wine bottles, the finesse with which milk was poured from a foot above a cup of hot chocolate until it billowed like a spinnaker in the wind.

But I soon realized that the true purpose of each expertly dissected duck, masterfully extracted cork, and droplessly decanted wine was to demonstrate the superiority of the server over the served. The garçon's impeccable dress merely signaled his obe-

dience to France's first law of fashion: tyranny through tailoring, or, it's easier to condescend when you are well dressed. (Elegance as a weapon is one of France's oldest traditions. I remember my incredulity when I discovered that the dashing white capes of French traffic police had lead weights sewn into the hems, so that they became anti-riot gear during student demonstrations.)

The garçon's art consists in showing the customer who is boss without giving direct cause for complaint. This is accomplished with a repertoire of facial expressions and body language familiar to anyone who spends time in Paris: fixed stare, as at a bug through a microscope ("That small an order is a waste of my time"); eyes riveted on ceiling, lips pursed and curled to the right ("If you have to ask the price, we can't do business"); mouth wide open, heavy breathing indicating bewilderment despite deep concentration ("The sounds you are making bear no relation to the French language").

I would study the French who fought back. (A popular preemptive strike consists of attaching so many specifications—"Let rip with the lemon!" "Skip the salt!" "Capers, not almonds!"—that the garçon is kept off balance.) Occasionally I, too, would make a fleeting attempt to hold my own. The trouble was, fighting energizes the French, whereas I would collapse, drained by the effort of each halting riposte, and tell myself I was a failure at the parry and thrust of Paris life.

What ever happened to the waiters who "forgot" how many croissants the starving artists of Montparnasse had consumed? I wondered. Where was the kind of waiter I had read about in books on Paris in the 1920s—the ones who coddled and consoled you instead of just plunking down the *plat du jour*? We had all met the arrogant stereotype, but Paris was supposed to have the world's best waiters, as well. I decided to search for restaurants where they still exist.

Just when I began to think that they were extinct, I found Franck Petit. At fifteen, Franck left school to become a waiter like his father, René. For the past twenty years, he has been serving some of France's best-known literary and political figures at the Brasserie Lipp (151 Boulevard St.-Germain). When customers say that is a long time, he pulls out a picture of René, who should have been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for winging platters of sauerkraut and *sérieux,* Lipp's imposing mugs of beer, from one end of the restaurant to the other for twenty-eight years.

Pierre ("Papa") Lasserre pampers his staff and customers at Chez Pierrot.

Though Franck's regulars include Marcello Mastroianni and half the French Chambre des Deputés, he prides himself on treating *les petits* as well as *les grands.* First, he pulls out the table and snugs you down on the banquette; then he tucks the napkin under your chin with all the tenderness of a mother hen. When Franck asks, "*Ça va?*" he waits for an answer. You can usually find him hunched over, listening attentively to details of a customer's operation or his daughter's wedding.

"You can't be a vet if you don't like animals, and you can't be a waiter if you don't like people," Franck says with a grin. "Waiters who don't like to smile might as well be undertakers. You get to wear the same uniform!"

Eventually I came up with a handful of old-fashioned places like Lipp where the waiters attend to customers' flagging spirits as well as their appetites. My favorite is the Brasserie de l'Ile St.-Louis, the cozy Alsatian restaurant over the footbridge from Notre-Dame at 55 Quai de Bourbon. It is the friendliest place in Paris.

The atmosphere approximates that of a Feydeau farce as the seven waiters slide, scurry, and scoot among the standing-room-only crowd, balancing piles of braised ham and tottering, green-stemmed

glasses of Riesling, and still manage to make you laugh. Come here twice, and you will be greeted forever with kisses on both cheeks in six languages by Yvon, who holds court behind the horseshoe-shape bar, adorned with a stuffed stork. Ed Koch, Edward Kennedy, and King Hussein have all surrendered to Yvon's embrace.

Marthe Guépratte, the proprietor of the Brasserie, knows that its fun-loving waiters are its star attraction. "I spoil them so much that they can't work anywhere else," she says. "They even come to visit us in Brittany when we are closed in August! Bad service is due to bad *propriétaires*, not bad waiters." When Madame Guépratte recently tried to retire, she discovered that she, too, is addicted to its buoyant bonhomie: "I know I'll be here until the end. If a six-hour shift is too much, I'll do three. I need the atmosphere."

An American friend was flabbergasted recently when a waiter at Le Muniche, a popular restaurant at 25 Rue de Buci, hung up his backpack as carefully as if it had been a mink coat. Waiters here, and at Le Petit Zinc, next door at number 27, have an uncanny way of remembering your name even if you have not been here for years, a trait that has endeared these bustling restaurants to Americans. Arthur Hartman, the former United States ambassador in Paris, has been a regular at Le Petit Zinc for years, and the Nobel Prize–winning physicist Leon Cooper makes it his first stop in Paris. The owners, Roger, Robert, and Claude Layrac, began as waiters in their father's *café tabac* in Paris's fourteenth arrondissement and then moved on to the Échaudé St.-Germain, *the* gathering place for jazz musicians in the 1950s.

Today, the Layracs, who have now added Paris's first late-night gourmet delicatessen to their empire, teach the ninety-five waiters who work for them to show as much kindness to customers as their customers at the old Échaudé showed to them. "We were lucky," recalls Roger. "We were treated like family." The Layracs send their garçons to English classes because it makes them more tolerant. "The worst thing a waiter can do is to gossip about customers in front of them assuming that they do not understand. Learning English gives them a different perspective. We also teach them how to act when a couple are having a fight."

There are no "waiters" at Chez Pierrot (18 Rue Étienne Marcel), a cozy bistro on the northern fringe of Les Halles. Far from watching over to make sure you don't wipe out the lard, Pierrot's waiters make it clear that you are [illegible] to have friends

Petit's Petit knows that his congenial waiters are what keep customers coming back to the Vron.

if you want to come back. "Papa," as Pierre Losson is known to regulars here, began at fourteen as a waiter at the Restaurant Monteil, where he learned the most important thing about food—that there should be a lot of it. Crocks of pâté a foot in diameter are left on the table here to make sure you eat up.

Imbibe water with dinner, and "Papa" will sidle over to commiserate. After all, what could keep you from sampling his wonderful wine but your health? With regular customers such as the American lawyer John Cochran, who comes here with clients, he often joins the party toward the end of the meal and chips in a bottle of wine. The waiters keep their spirits up by playing pranks. Hiding shoes removed during dinner is a favorite. One customer got all the way to the sidewalk before he noticed he had a hanger tied to his coat. Like Madame Guépratte, Losson pampers his staff. "Good waiters are a disappearing race," he says, "like dinosaurs."

Two of Paris's most famous "dinosaurs" worked for forty years at Chez Benoît (20 Rue St.-Martin), a bistro so French that it seems to have stepped out of a Dufy painting. "Everyone knew Eugène and Léon," recalls Michel Petit, who has missed only ten meals in the thirty years since he took the restaurant over from his grandfather,

Benoît. "Eugène was tall and thin, very formal and polite, while Léon was short, fat, and vulgar. He *tutoy*-ed everyone. They hated each other so much we had to divide the restaurant into two zones: Eugène and his customers out front, Léon and his in back. When Eugène died, Léon told customers that he'd been put in jail for molesting little girls."

Today such professionals are so hard to come by that Petit, who pads around peering out paternally over his *demi-lune* glasses, trains his own waiters. "I tell them that they're like doctors. Their job is to take these overstressed people and help them to lower their blood pressure in a couple of hours. People go out today less for food than to relax and be entertained. The food has to be good, of course, but only about five percent are real connoisseurs. That's why waiter charisma is the most important thing a restaurant can have."

Chez Benoît has it. The smiling garçons set a plate of complimentary *amuse-gueules* before you the minute you sit down, refill your dish three times with superb cream-of-mussel soup from an old-fashioned tureen, and proudly parade the vast assortment of hors d'oeuvres and desserts before you to help you make up your mind. The trouble is that feasting your eyes on the panoply of excellent dishes often has the opposite effect: you want it all.

The waiters here prefer American customers. "They are less haughty and demanding," explains Michel Petit. "The typical Latin mentality is 'I have paid, so I have all the rights.' There's a French expression that says, 'To be a good waiter you must be lazy in the morning, a thief at noon, and a pimp at night.' But one reason waiters are often so disagreeable is that the French treat them badly. Dogs bite people who don't like dogs."

Another reason for France's disgruntled garçons is nouvelle cuisine. The onetime prima donnas of the dining room have been reduced to acting as delivery boys carrying food intricately arranged in the kitchen by the chef. Chefs who want to hang on to their best waiters have started saving a few star jobs for them to do. Christiane Massia, who runs her kitchen at the Aquitaine restaurant (54 Rue de Dantzig) with an all-female *brigade de cuisine*, always leaves a whole fish to be boned and served by her maître d'. "He is the Paganini of the carving knife, and I don't want to deprive him," she says.

The waiters at Jamin (32 Rue de Longchamp) slice the superb *canette rosée aux fines épices*, lamb *en croûte de sel*, and *volaille en vessie* in front of customers, not just to show what they can do but because the three-star chef Joël Robuchon believes that in truly great cuisine all five senses must be tantalized.

The chef Christiane Massia, at L'Aquitaine, leaves the final flourishes to her waiters.

By hand-picking and training his own waiters, Robuchon has managed to create something unheard-of in Paris, an intimate, relaxed three-star restaurant. "It used to be, the better the restaurant, the haughtier the waiters," says Robuchon. "But now that so many chefs own their restaurants, they prefer to train their own waiters. Attitude is more important today than technical skill.

"I ask waiters to be attentive and smiling, as if they were having good friends over to their own house. They must put all personal problems aside when they enter the restaurant, like actors on a stage."

If restaurateurs like Mssrs. Robuchon and Petit are recognizing that waiter charisma is even more important than food in bringing back customers, does this mean that the reign of the tyrannical garçon is over? Don't count on it. In fact, we might even miss him. His formidable hauteur does, after all, add a certain drama to dining—and, as we all know, makes for wonderful stories afterward. □

Justine De Lacy is a writer based in Paris.

Mostly for Love

The wine merchants who set the standards for the industry

By John Winthrop Haeger

In the cavernous cellar at Domaine Tempier, half a dozen sparkling glasses were laid out on an upended barrel. Jean-Marie Peyraud, Domaine Tempier's second-generation wine maker, appeared from behind a huge cask to greet his visitors. They chatted briefly about the weather, the foundering dollar, and falling prices for Pouilly-Fuissé, before Kermit Lynch consulted his notebook. "Jean-Marie," he asked, "do you think we could retaste all the vattings of the 1984 vintage, and perhaps have a quick peek at 1985 and 1986 too, just to see how they are coming along?" Lynch turned to me. "I like wines that taste alive, so it's fun to taste from the barrel. The Peyrauds always draw straight from the cask when they serve bouillabaisse, and that's great!"

Kermit Lynch (right) and Jean-Marie Peyraud do some tasting at Domaine Tempier.

Domaine Tempier produces the finest wine in the Bandol appellation, the best and biggest of four small areas in Provence lying along the coast just west of Toulon. Its largest client is the California wine merchant Kermit Lynch. Every year Lynch buys about 3,000 cases of Peyraud's red and rosé. About half of this wine is resold directly to Lynch's customers from his retail store, in an inelegant part of Berkeley. The rest goes to restaurants and wine shops in [illegible] fifty-five states. The intention [illegible] Europe's best wine is Lynch's métier, but he buys fewer than 750,000 bottles a year, roughly the total production of two middling châteaux in Bordeaux. Occasionally he contracts for a full shipping container from a grower, but a few dozen cases is commoner, and sometimes he gets only three or four. "A Kermit Lynch selection is about as close to a guarantee of quality as you are likely to find," says Robert Parker, the universally respected wine writer.

Lynch's operation resembles those of Robert Chadderdon and Neal Rosenthal in New York, Robert Haas in Vermont, and Martine Saunier in San Rafael, California, but is unlike nearly any other in the agrobusiness of imported wine. These few independent souls ply the trade in a tightly personalized, labor-intensive way, exercising influence wholly out of proportion to their insignificant market share. If you dine at the likes of Windows on the World or Le Bernardin, in New York, Stars, in San Francisco, or Chez Panisse, in Berkeley, the chances are excellent that you will drink one of their wines. "They are on the cutting edge," says Robert Parker. "They buy from tiny producers, but they get impeccable quality. They import the benchmark wines."

Forget the Villa Banfis. Confine the discussion to fine, estate-bottled wines from France, Italy, and Spain. Even this choice segment of the market is dominated by large importers here, and by a Byzantine array of *négociants, courtiers,* and *commissionaires* in Europe. Big importers need plenty of wine shipped year-round, and they need a stable product, consistent from bottle to bottle. "A lot of wine is, in effect, killed," Robert Parker explains,

Photographs by Lisa Lunn

Domaine Tempier produces the best wine in the Bandol appellation, near the sea in Provence.

"but a big importer never has to worry that a bottle will be returned."

European brokers are indispensable to American importers who trade in very large quantities, spend limited time in the field, or can't speak the lingo. They can be enormously convenient for experienced and conscientious buyers, too, but even under the most felicitous circumstances middlemen cannot help buffering the relationships between European wine makers and their American consumers. Often the effect is to homogenize a product whose soul is variety, to diffuse responsibility for the bottle that arrives on an American table, and to mediate relationships that work best when they are intensely personal. "Despite claims to the contrary," says Neal Rosenthal, "ninety-nine and nine-tenths percent of the time the middlemen have *not* been eliminated, and it makes a

[illegible] preferences. If you establish personal [illegible] you will get the best *cuvée*. Period."

Any designated lot of unfinished wine can become a *cuvée*. In regions where "master" blending is far from universal, a *cuvée* may be made of wine from just one parcel of vineyard, or from older vines, or from wine set aside for barrel fermentation, or simply from a vat that has developed a personality of its own. The direct importers often play on the "*cuvée* consciousness" of wine makers in Burgundy, the Loire, the Rhône, and elsewhere by tasting individually from every vat and "reserving" their personal choice when the vintage is only a few months old.

Having reserved a particular *cuvée*, the importer may affect the way his chosen vatting is finished. "Basically," says Chadderdon, "a broker buys a wine on the telephone. Not only do I buy the grower's cellar; I'll also ask him not to fine, I'll tell him he has a problem with his cork, and I'll even tell him when to bottle. Wine makers tolerate this—sometimes even welcome it—because they realize that as an importer I know a lot about *other* wines." Indeed, the importers' requests, which usually sound more like entreaties than commands, are often music to the wine maker's ear—for natural, unfiltered wine of the sort their fathers used to make, guaranteed sold, without recrimination or possibility of return, even if it should do a normal thing like throw a deposit. Too good to be true? Skittish growers, burned in the past when an importer or distributor has returned just such a "natural" wine, have forced Lynch, more than once, to put his guarantee in writing. "Three or four times I have seen an unfiltered wine go bad," he writes in his delightful new book, *Adventures on the Wine Route* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux), "a minuscule proportion of the unfiltered wines I have imported over the years. It may be unrealistic, but I believe that customers who have such a wine go bad in their cellar should accept the loss and shut up about it. Complaining scares your wine merchant, who in turn scares the winemaker, who then for reasons of security begins to sterilize his wines. And who gains from all that? If one loves natural wines, one accepts an occasional calamity. We would not castrate all men because some of them go haywire and commit rape. At least I wouldn't."

In exceptional cases, special handling requested by an importer leads a wine maker to resist his practice across the board. Until 1976 the best cuvée of Domaine Tem-

"I like wines that taste alive."

Neal Rosenthal tends to "hang out in Burgundy," here with Madame Ferret in her vineyards in Fuissé.

pier were labeled and sold as *cuvée spéciale*. Lynch persuaded Jean-Marie Peyraud to make further and finer distinctions. Now, in most years a *cuvée* La Migoua and a *cuvée* La Tourtine are bottled separately, each produced exclusively from grapes grown in those historically demarcated vineyard parcels. "It is something we learned from Kermit," Peyraud says appreciatively. Now, La Migoua and La Tourtine have become commercial successes. The direct importers have their critics. Some in the trade wonder aloud if they are not more interested in selling themselves than in selling the wines and the growers they handle. Others suggest that they rationalize their need to buy year in and year out, even if the vintage is off, in order to keep their personal relationships intact. "That's absolutely untrue," Chadderdon retorts. "I don't buy every year. If the vintage is poor I'll encourage a grower to declassify or not to bottle, or I'll unload it in Europe. But it's a dicey subject, and I've had some bumpy times."

The small importers have also set a new standard for the transport of wine. Parker gives Lynch credit for pioneering here. His innovation was the use of refrigerated transoceanic shipping containers called "reefers" to ensure, he says, that the wine will taste the same when it is sold in California as it did when he tasted it in the maker's cellar. "Even Thomas Jefferson knew about reefers," Lynch smiles. "He understood enough about wine and temperature to insist that his commands be shipped from France to Virginia only in October, when the temperature was okay on the North Atlantic and there was little chance of bad weather forcing a ship into warmer latitudes."

There is no consistency of choice or preference among the small importers, but Burgundy is a common denominator. Saunier was born there, helped in her aunt's vineyard as a girl, and does 75 percent of her business there. Lynch's first purchase in 1973 was Volnay. Rosenthal says he tends to "hang out in Burgundy," on the ground that Burgundies are "the most intellectually demanding wines in the world." They have all done a bit of business in Bordeaux, which produces America's most popular fine-wine import, but the organization of the Bordeaux trade virtually precludes their personal style. Lynch likes to think he has had something to do with the growing popularity of Rhônes, and his list is now heavily loaded with wines from Languedoc and Provence, many of which he introduced to the American market. Rosenthal's second love, after Burgundy, is the reds from Piedmont. Chadderdon ranges widely across France, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, and Australia. If they combined their lists, the result would include many of the most respected

names in the wine-making business.

In many ways these direct importers are all offspring of the late Frank Schoonmaker, the most influential American wine merchant of the post-Prohibition era. He was the first American to seek out small growers in Burgundy and to venture aggressively into the Loire Valley and Germany. Lynch, Chadderdon, and Haas have carried on the tradition. Saunier found good Burgundy so scarce when she emigrated to California, in the sixties, that she soon began importing just to put fine wine on her own table. Parker congratulates Lynch for the "guts" to import, today, unknown wines from appellations like Faugères, Savennières, and Corsica. He and the other high-end importers have made a dramatic contribution to the range of European, and now Australian, wines available in North America. Fifteen years ago most of the wines they handle could not be found in this country.

As for style, Chadderdon says he selects understated, suave, complete wines. "I look for wines that have no holes in them, that fill and satisfy one hundred percent. And I dislike the obvious." Rosenthal talks about finesse, subtlety, and nuance. Lynch will not admit to a style. "I choose wines with personality," he says. Pressed, he illustrates: "Robert Dagueneau, in Pouilly-Fumé, still ferments in big oak casks. Each cask is different, but he doesn't number them. When he and I tasted, we named them for French movie stars. We called the cool and flashy vatting Catherine Deneuve, and a more rustic, solid *cuvée* was Simone Signoret. People sometimes tell me, when they've had one of my wines blind, that they could tell it was 'mine.' But these wines are too different. I don't see how anyone could say that."

Lynch looks for producers he can follow over a period of years. "It's a little like following a composer," he says—he was a struggling singer-musician when he went into the wine business, fifteen years ago. "I like to follow wine makers. Stumbling across one good *cuvée* isn't terribly interesting. But what someone like Jean-Louis Chave does with Hermitage in a problematic year like 1977 is much more interesting than Étienne Guigal [the Côte Rôtie grower and *négociant*] in a great year." Rosenthal says he was probably fortunate to have made his first purchases in a "weak" year like 1979 because he got to know which wine makers were consistently producing good wine "despite the vagaries of vintage."

They taste relentlessly in their search for growers, young or old, new or established, who can be added to their lists. Lynch depends on leads from wine makers he already knows, who are often willing to suggest someone interesting in a neighboring appellation, and on restaurants with enterprising cellar masters. "There are places I go just to order wine, like Taillevent, in Paris. That's where I discovered Raveneau—a superb producer of *grand cru* Chablis. Then it took me two years to talk him into selling me some." Lynch laughs. "The first time I phoned him, he said, 'I'm sold out, Monsieur,' and hung up. Click." Saunier finds nothing more exciting than "to discover a young guy who is just starting." "I believe in the new generation of wine makers. They have been to enological school, but they also listen to the old-timers." Chadderdon is more pessimistic about finding new growers: "There are no secrets left in the wine world."

Lynch, who now spends six months of the year in France, sometimes feels gloomy

In the cellar of Domaine Ferret, Neal Rosenthal and Madame taste Pouilly-Fuissé from the vat in search of the best *cuvée*. Verdict: *"Très bon."*

IM GOODBERG-ARCHIVE PICTURES

Martine Saunier and friends taste some of her highly promising 1986 Burgundies in the Inner Jade Room, at Gump's in San Francisco.

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ETHAN HOFFMAN/ARCHIVE PICTURES

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Let us hope that importers like Chadderdon, Lynch, Rosenthal, and Saunier will survive too. Their business has its rewards, among other things in camaraderie and what Rosenthal calls "the nobility of wine," but it is hard work. "In Europe, it's typically an eighteen-hour day, from six until midnight," he says. "I'll taste four cellars a day and finish the last at nine in the evening. I almost never eat lunch, and I put about 10,000 miles a year on rental cars abroad. But it gives me intense satisfaction. It's a business I can conduct on a handshake." Chadderdon, who deals with more than 200 producers worldwide and visits each two or three times a year, is pressing the outer limits of physical possibility. If they were willing to sell their names, as Schoonmaker did when he was sixty-six, they could no doubt make more money. Unfortunately, there are no economies of scale in hand-picking handmade products. "Volume," as Chadderdon puts it, "defeats my purpose, which is to find and sell the cream of the cream." Saunier says, "If I have to make a living, I might as well do something I love." Lynch admits that he sometimes doubts his motivation. "It's a hell of a lot of work, but it just wouldn't interest me to do it any other way." □

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By Deidre Sadeh

Photographs by Sylvia Plachy

HOT SHOTS

None is a stroke of luck

Anyone who has played tennis knows the ace—the magnificent, fiercely flying, unanswerable shot that inspires envy in every man (no man can get his racquet on it). What is the nearest equivalent in a court enclosed by walls, all of them legal playing surfaces? A shot with the speed of a tennis ace will merely bounce back into play. Yet there are "aces" in squash, court tennis, and platform tennis. Each requires almost lapidary precision. None is a stroke of luck.

While bearing strong resemblance to lawn tennis, platform tennis (fondly known as "paddle") allows players to return shots bouncing back into the court off the wire-mesh walls. In other words, what would be a surefire coup de grace in tennis does not pay off in paddle. Steady play defines the game. Even so, there is a killer shot, and no one does it better or more often than Doug Russell, the forty-four-year-old professional champion. Its name: the "seam shot."

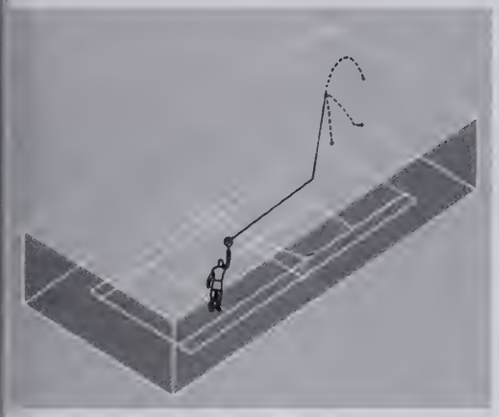
Perfect synthesis of stroke mechanics and timing—the seam shot requires nothing less. Standing behind the baseline near center court, Russell drives the ball, often with a slight topspin, so that it bounces directly into the wires' "sweet spot"—the corner where the side and back screens meet. The result is not exactly an ace but a completely unpredictable carom. It may shoot straight out, spring into the air, or even—with a high trajectory—slide down the back wire wall. The defending player, unable to anticipate the ball's direction, scrambles after it helplessly.

The seam shot can be hit as a serve or an overhead, which is, in fact, an abbreviated form of the service motion. It takes guts to attempt the shot as a serve because the ball must bounce for the first time at the very rear of the service court, and paddle allows only one serve per point. Easier is the alternative: the overhead return. If the hapless opponent is at the net, he is too far from the back corner of the court to judge the spin and speed of the ball. At best, he can manage a weak get. Baffling his adversary, Doug Russell shrugs off another perfect seam shot with a flippant "No sweat."

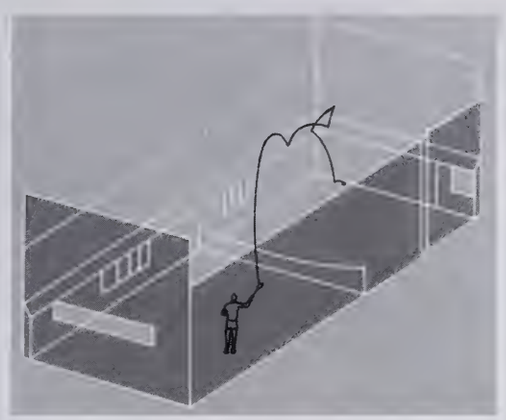
"Undoubtedly, six of every ten boomerangs I deliver will cause serious trouble," says Wayne Davies. That is an understatement. Davies, a thirty-three-year-old Australian-born court-tennis pro, happens to hold all the national and most of the international titles, including that of world champion.

Court tennis is the chess of racquet games. It is played amid a curious conglomeration of architectural elements taken from medieval monastery courtyards, farms, and castles. The ball is not simply volleyed from side to side, as in lawn tennis, but is also propelled across a sloping penthouse roof, driven into pillared openings, or galleries (including one where a bell rings to announce successful shots), and deflected off a projecting buttress called the tambour. Complicating the game further, the court is divided into a service and a receiving side.

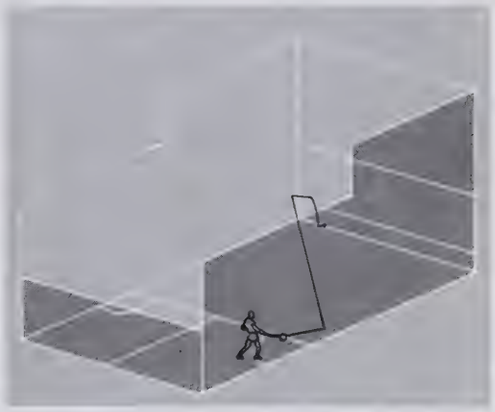
To hit the fearsome boomerang serve, Davies positions himself behind the second gallery (about two-thirds of the way from the back wall to the net). He spanks the ball underhand so that it bounces for the first time on the side penthouse approximately fifteen feet from the end wall. Bounding inexorably forward, the ball strikes the back penthouse two feet from the corner seam, rebounds to the back wall, and lands once again on the side



The Seam Shot



The Boomerang



The Gordie

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOSEPH PASCHKE

penthouse. From there it rolls, as if commanded by the devil himself, to fall on the court, bouncing parallel to the end wall and a bare two or three inches from it. Scuffle as he might, the opponent simply cannot get his racquet behind the ball.

Squash is like a heated, articulate argument. There is a violent cross fire of shots—wicked drives, flowing lobs, elegant boasts, confounding reverse corners, dinks, and drops. Good squash players must contemplate, litigate, lure, and bluff. Only the best can go for the one-shot kill. Gordon Anderson, at thirty-eight a veteran squash champion, is known for doing just that. He has invented the deadliest offensive weapon in the game—the "Gordie." The shot is a variation of the boast—that is, a blow hit into a side wall to cause a bewildering confluence of angles. A winning boast ricochets from the side wall to the front, to the nick—the bounce-killing crack between the opposite side wall and the floor. But unless it is perfectly executed a boast just sits up in the forecourt, a cinch for the opponent to put away.

The Gordie shuts out all possibility of return. The ball hits a side wall so that it rebounds to the opposite wall, where it picks up reverse spin. Still, it has just enough forward thrust to "kiss" the front wall and die. The best that even the speediest competitor can do is get to the ball as it solemnly completes its second bounce. Only top professionals have been able to make the Gordie part of their strategic repertoire. "It requires," Anderson explains, "excellent timing and the whiplike motion of a major-league pitcher." □

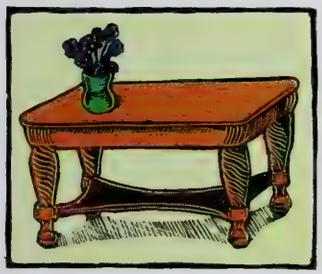
Deidre Sadeh, a Sunday tennis player, is on the staff of this magazine.

Three aces: Gordon Anderson (right) on the prowl in the squash court. Opposite, top: Doug Russell on the platform-tennis court, in New York City. Wayne Davies attacks with his oddly shaped court-tennis racquet.

FAMILY ROMANCES

The Livingston houses of the Hudson Valley, and the stories they tell

By Jamie James



There are few persons, among what may be called the travelling class, who know the beauty of the finest American country seats. Many are ignorant of the very existence of those rural gems that embroider the landscape here and there, in the older and wealthier parts of the country. Held in the retirement of private life, they are rarely visited, except by those who enjoy the friendship of their possessors. . . .—The Horticulturist, and Journal of Rural Art and Rural Taste

Thus begins an essay published in 1847 by Andrew Jackson Downing, America's first professional landscape gardener. His subject was the great houses of the mid–Hudson Valley; and, remarkably, for a handful of those estates his words still hold. Most of the great manor houses that have survived, it is true, have been restored and made into museums, yet a few are still privately owned and in the hands of descendants of their founders—living organisms with roots that go back to the seventeenth century.

America has always prided itself on not having an aristocracy, and, strictly speaking, there is none. However, the posterity of Robert Livingston have effectively been the lords of the Hudson Valley since 1686, when that enterprising Scotsman received a patent from King James II for 160,000 acres along the eastern bank of the river, roughly halfway between Poughkeepsie and Albany. The estate was called the Livingston Manor; the founding father was styled the lord of the manor.

As is the wont of great dynastic families, the Livingstons were mad housebuilders. This stretch of the Hudson Valley bristles with their residences past and present. It is easy to see why many of these estates have been transferred to the public trust: they are anachronisms, designed as manorial residences for large families with staffs of servants in an era when people did not have any hope of being warm in the wintertime. In Virginia and New England, the homes of Robert Livingston's compatriots long ago passed out of private hands, consigned to the tender curatorial mercies of preservation societies and government agencies. Yet the Livingstons persevere, clinging to their native patch of soil in spite of all that time and the tax man can do to dislodge them.

There are any number of ways to organize a tour of the Livingston houses in the mid-Hudson; they embrace every era of American history and native architectural style. Yet perhaps the most useful way to think about them is in terms of their relative success in retaining their independent character—the extent to which they are still "held in the retirement of private life." Oak Hill, a sturdy and comfortable brick house built in 1795, is neither the oldest nor the grandest of the Livingston houses, but it is surely the most Livingstonian: ever since John Livingston, a great-grandson of the first lord of the manor, built the place, it has passed down from son to son in a direct line.

At Oak Hill, Henry Livingston, his wife, Maria May, and their grandson Nathaniel. Their ancestor John, who built the mansion in 1795, left the spyglass.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY BEN NEUHART

The current master of Oak Hill is the ninth-generation Henry Livingston. Two years ago, when the family celebrated the tercentenary of the granting of the royal patent, he emerged as a family spokesman. He is a quiet, private man, but his family pride runs deep. "It is a tremendous asset to a person to know where he comes from," he says. "We can trace our family in Scotland back twelve generations before the first lord of the manor. I don't find that kind of continuity in many other families."

Oak Hill sits on a bluff overlooking the river a mile and a half from the site of the original manor house, which was built in 1699 and burned down in 1799. Henry Livingston says, "When John Livingston was looking for a place to build his house, he climbed an oak tree on this spot to see what the view would be. People told him he was crazy, that it would be too cold here." He concludes with an approving smile, "He built the house here anyway." Oak Hill is not now the beauty it perhaps once was; over a hundred years ago Henry Livingston's great-grandfather remodeled the exterior, adding a mansard roof that makes the house from the outside look almost like a garden-variety Victorian. Yet Livingston says of his home, with satisfaction, "It's built to last."

Every inch of this house is lived in. Children's toys are in cheerful disarray in the central hallway, bumping up against a massive and ornately carved *kaas*, a Dutch armoire the first lord is believed to have brought with him when he emigrated to the New World. The cat's box is in the front sitting room, perched atop a crate containing a cast-iron fireback recently loaned to the Clermont Historic Site. In the dining room, under the humorless gaze of a portrait, by Nehemiah Partridge, of the first lord of the manor, clean laundry is neatly stacked on table and sideboard.

In the parlor at Oak Hill (opposite a drum kit, which is set up in the sunny corner) there is a portrait painted by Robert Fulton, the steamboat pioneer, who went into business with the Livingstons and married one of their daughters. It depicts Lord Stanhope, Fulton's patron in London when he was a young man seeking a career as an artist. Stanhope, whose interests extended to science as well as art, is shown holding in his hands a light-sensitive plate: this painting is among the earliest depictions of the research that led to photography.

Henry Livingston considers it a major, perhaps the principal, accomplishment of his life to be passing Oak Hill on to his chil-

Photographs by Neal Slavin

Winty Aldrich, in tie, and his mother, with hat, amid family in the library at Rokeby. Daughters and nieces look on. Above: A niece aims from the porch.

dren intact. It has not been easy. Unlike his Rockefeller and Astor neighbors, none of his antecedents ever amassed a huge fortune. He notes with uncharacteristic bitterness, "The tax man is always in pursuit of American antiquity." He is not hopeful about the future. It is "very questionable," he says, whether in the long run Oak Hill will stay in the hands of Livingstons: "The only way for us to keep Oak Hill would be if one of my children were very successful in business."

If Oak Hill wears the informal and generally prosperous aspect of an actively lived-in family home, Rokeby, about fifteen miles downriver, has declined and faded. The current owners, a partnership of family members, are devoting all their energies simply to ensuring the house's survival. One of them, J. Winthrop Aldrich, says that although Rokeby for now remains a private residence, he and his partners are contemplating "moving in the not-for-profit direction." They have their work cut out for them: the house is a wreck. Says Winty (as he is known to everyone), "Rokeby is magnificent in its very disrepair."

The superbly proportioned drawing room, which faces the river, looks like the untidy back room of a country antiques store. Piled together helter-skelter are silver, miscellaneous paintings, Victorian chairs, ivory miniatures, and oddments and souvenirs from foreign travels—valuable antiques and rubbish side by side. On one of the two grand pianos is a part of the family's Limoges service for sixty. Stacked on the spacious front porch are, incongruously, back issues of *Soviet Life*.

The full-time residents of Rokeby are Winty's brother, Richard (called Ricky), and his wife, Ania. Ricky Aldrich is more concerned about halting the house's physical decline than he is about sorting cups and saucers; if you ask him what he is proudest of at Rokeby, he is more likely to show you his ingenious drainage system for the front porch (the gutters drain through polyethylene tubing in the hollow columns) than any of the museum-quality pictures or furniture. Before an excursion to Rokeby, a visitor is warned: Ricky is a brilliant man, a polyglot and a polymath, but he and Ania are a bit . . . odd. They have a somewhat motley

Miss Suckley, seen above in Wilderstein's White and Gold Room, hopes the house will be preserved intact beyond her lifetime. The Morning Room (right) is still as J. B. Tiffany arranged and designed it.

following of friends and hangers-on, one is told, who move in at Rokeby for extended visits. Although Ania, whose eyebrows are tinted blue, cuts an outré figure by the standards prevailing in rural New York State, and Ricky's grimy overalls seem strange dress for receiving guests, the Aldriches are unfailingly amiable and gentle-mannered. And there is nothing strange about their manifest love for and devotion to the place.

A fieldstone house of French design, Rokeby was built in the second decade of the nineteenth century by General John Armstrong on riverside property that came into his hands through his marriage to Alida Livingston, great-granddaughter of the first lord of the manor. General Armstrong was a United States senator from New York until 1804, when President Thomas Jefferson sent him to Paris to replace his brother-in-law, Chancellor Robert R. Livingston, as an ambassador to France. Winty Aldrich is a well-informed amateur historian and a skilled and encyclopedic raconteur of Rokebyana. Some of his anecdotes, he concedes, may be apocryphal, like this one: "It is said that after Napoleon met General Armstrong, who had come to replace the chancellor, a man who was quite hard of hearing, the emperor turned to Talleyrand and said, 'What strange people these Americans are! First they send me a man who is deaf, and now they send me a man who is dumb.' " (General Armstrong spoke, but not French.)

After six years' service in Paris, General Armstrong returned to the Hudson Valley to build his estate. With him he brought a load of French furniture and a flock of merino sheep, which Napoleon had given him as a going-away present. Construction of the house was interrupted by the War of 1812, during which time Armstrong served as President Madison's secretary of war. Many historians have held him to blame for the burning of Washington, but Winty Aldrich loyally sticks up for his ancestor, citing Henry Adams in his defense.

General Armstrong originally called his house La Bergerie (The Sheepfold) in honor of Napoleon's gift, but around 1818 his only daughter, Margaret, persuaded him to rename it Rokeby, after the epic poem of the same title by Sir Walter Scott, which she had read on her honeymoon. Her groom and afterward the master of the estate until his death, in 1875, was William Backhouse Astor, son and principal heir of John Jacob Astor, widely known in his day as the richest man in America. William B., it is said, increased his father's fortune from $20 million to something over $100 million.

William B. Astor built the house's five-story tower, installing in its ground floor the house's library, perhaps the work of Alexander Jackson Davis. This remarkable octagonal room, with its somber fantasy in ribbed *faux bois* spiraling down from the center of the ceiling, is one of the most extravagant works of Gothic revival in North America. It still houses the excellent collections of General Armstrong and William B. Astor. Winty Aldrich reminisces, "I can remember my grandmother pointing to that corner and saying that that was where William Backhouse Astor kept his favorite chair. He would sit there for hours and hours poring over his lexicons, for he was a great classicist. When he was an undergraduate in Berlin, he was tutored by Wilhelm von Humboldt and roomed with Schopenhauer."

There are gaps in the Rokeby story, Winty Aldrich says, that will never be filled in, for at the end of his life, in the 1870s, William B. Astor caused to be burned several crates of material that had belonged to his father. These included financial records as well as numerous wooden musical instruments; besides trading furs, John Jacob Astor once peddled flutes and other wind instruments. Why hide that? His son's decision was governed, says Aldrich, not by a need to cover up any shadiness in the family business—or to do away with the flutes, which were a matter of indifference—but rather by "an obsessive sense of privacy."

After William B.'s death, the house passed to his granddaughter, née Margaret Astor Ward, the wife of a New York congressman named John Armstrong Chanler. The Chanlers died within two years of the old man, leaving behind ten orphan children, the eldest just fourteen years old. Known variously as the Astor Orphans and the Amazing Chanlers, they raised themselves at Rokeby; their only steady supervision came from a cousin who acted (rather ineffectually, one gathers) as head of the family. As adults, they went their separate and multifarious ways. Robert Winthrop Chanler was a bohemian and self-taught artist whose phantasmagoric work is to be found throughout Rokeby, notably in a mural on the porch depicting Napoleon's donation of the merino sheep to the artist's great-great-grandfather. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler, lieutenant governor of New York, stood unsuccessfully as Democratic candidate for the governorship. William Astor Chanler was a congressman, soldier of fortune, and big-game hunter (a number

Wilderstein is all the more evocative for the house's gently deteriorated condition.

of his trophies from Africa hang on Rokeby's walls). Margaret Livingston Chanler Aldrich crusaded as a war nurse; on the front lawn of Rokeby lies an ancient bronze Chinese cannon she brought back as a souvenir of her sojourn in Peking, where she served as a Red Cross volunteer after the Boxer rebellion.

In 1895 Margaret Chanler had her friend Stanford White make substantial alterations to the house, including an enlargement of the drawing room and a redesign of the main staircase. Four years later she bought out her siblings and operated Rokeby as a dairy farm; among various other improvements, she added a stable, commissioned from McKim, Mead & White. Winty Aldrich, her grandson, well aware how much repair work needs to be done, is undaunted. "Our efforts at Rokeby are alive and well," he says. "I feel we have an obligation to posterity—this is a remarkable house. It's not just Winty Aldrich's crazy notion. It's special."

About ten miles downriver from Rokeby is Wilderstein, a unique cypress-wood house in the Queen Anne style, the residence of Miss Margaret L. Suckley. Wilderstein has been her home since she was born here, ninety-six years ago; after her death, ownership of the house will pass to a not-for-profit group called Wilderstein Preservation, of which Winty Aldrich is a trustee. Notes Aldrich, "I always call Miss Suckley 'Cousin Daisy,' though I believe in fact we are fifth or seventh cousins. *Cousinage* among all of us is very much a state of mind."

The house is, relatively speaking, a Johnny-come-lately. Miss Suckley's grandfather, Thomas Holy Suckley, a Livingston cousin, built the original house in 1852. Miss Suckley, a charming and hospitable lady who leads an active life despite her advanced age, explains: "When my father inherited it, in eighty-eight, he added on two stories and the tower and the back part of the house. He decorated the ground floor the way it is now." Miss Suckley's father also hired Calvert Vaux to landscape the grounds and design the gatehouse and the rustic, Adirondack-style gazebo, and J. B. Tiffany to decorate the mansion's interior.

The weather-beaten exterior has not been painted in over fifty years, which gives its appearance at a distance a certain Charles Addams air. Tiffany's work in the entrance hall picks up the spooky motif. The dark, tooled-leather wall coverings are peeling from the wall; a fantastic bronze lamp in the shape of a griffin (from Miss Suckley's mother's family coat of arms) tops the newel post; the stained-glass windows in the staircase wall throw down spectral colored light through the gothic gloom.

The southeast parlor, called the White and Gold Room, wears a poignant air of faded gentility. The champagne-colored satin that covers the walls and upholsters the Louis XVI–style furniture (specially designed for the room) is now ripped and hangs in tatters. In Wilderstein's attic, wrapped in cotton and tar paper, is the parlor carpet—designed and woven for the room by Aubusson—which exactly fits around every molding and into each niche. The overall effect is almost excessively romantic, reminiscent of Satis House, Miss Havisham's home in *Great Expectations*, though without the overtones of dementia.

Still, it seems a lonely place. Miss Suckley often speaks of her late cousin "the president"—Franklin D. Roosevelt—whom she served as personal archivist during the latter part of his life. It was she who gave him his beloved little dog, Fala, and she was in the room with him at Warm Springs, Georgia, when he died. Since Miss Suckley's sister died last year, her companions at Wilderstein have been two large tabby cats.

A big house that has been quiet for a very long time inevitably

Edgewater, no longer in Livingston hands, has been lavishly restored by Richard H. Jenrette, who has retrieved such original furnishings as the Duncan Phyfe sofa.

"No matter how discreetly it's done, when you remove the family from occupancy, something dies."

grows a little melancholy. Miss Suckley remembers Wilderstein as it used to be: "My mother was very hospitable, and she loved having the house completely full. Sometimes we had twenty cousins staying here. About five o'clock in the afternoon my father would play the piano, and we would sing hymns. In the evenings, Father would read to us in the library—children's books when we were young, Emerson when we were older. He was an extremely nice father. He wouldn't have read Emerson to us if he hadn't been." She is pleased that the house's future has been planned for, through the creation of Wilderstein Preservation. Says Miss Suckley, "I hope it's going to be preserved, for I think there's a great deal in it worth preserving."

By heading in the direction of a museumlike public trust, Wilderstein is following the lead of many historic houses in the mid–Hudson Valley, such as Clermont, home of Robert R. Livingston, for twenty-four years chancellor of New York (in which capacity he administered to George Washington the presidential oath of office); Olana, the home of the landscape painter Frederic Edwin Church; and the Mills Mansion, Stanford White's beaux arts extravaganza in Staatsburg. Now in various stages of restoration, these houses are maintained as historic sites by the state of New York and are popular destinations for tourists and picnicking day-trippers from New York City. The area's newest restoration effort is at Montgomery Place, the palatial house built by Janet Livingston Montgomery, sister of the chancellor, and Alida Livingston Armstrong (the first chatelaine of Rokeby). Montgomery Place is being refurbished at enormous expense by Historic Hudson Valley, the organization formerly known as Sleepy Hollow Restorations.

Several of the old Livingston houses, however, have been bought by outsiders who have restored them and kept them as residences. Particularly opulent is the job Richard H. Jenrette has done at Edgewater, a house built in 1820 by John R. Livingston, yet another sibling of the chancellor, as a wedding gift for his daughter. The house is in the stately, neoclassical style that was popular at that time among southern planters. Jenrette, who is the chief investment officer of the Equitable Life Assurance Society and the chairman of Historic Hudson Valley, bought the house in 1969 from Gore Vidal and restored it to its condition as documented in an inventory of 1872. His endeavor has been remarkably successful. He has tracked down several pieces of furniture that were in Edgewater at that time, going as far afield as Spain and Brooklyn to recover some splendid items by Duncan Phyfe. These, and the gleaming varnished floors and meticulous *faux marbre* work on the walls, are certainly grand, but the effect is sterile. We are 180 degrees away from the red-blooded conviviality of Oak Hill.

Less grand but eminently habitable is Teviotdale, built in 1774 by Walter Livingston, second son of the third lord of the manor. The house later belonged to Robert Fulton, who married Walter's daughter Harriet in Teviotdale's drawing room. It had lapsed into almost total ruin by1969, when it was bought by Harrison Cultra, the interior designer, and Richard Barker (both now deceased), who undertook a complete restoration, enlarging the entrance hall and furnishing the house in the English country style. Teviotdale is now the home of Victor Cornelius, a New York advertising executive and amateur historian, who is producing a series of documentaries about the great houses of the Hudson.

"The history of this country," says Henry Livingston, "was written by New Englanders." For this reason, he believes, New York has been denied the place it deserves in the annals of the early history of the Republic. And though he does not say so, one might also conclude that the Livingstons have not received their due, either. He has a point. Chancellor Livingston, for example, was a coauthor of the Declaration of Independence, the nation's first secretary of foreign affairs, and the negotiator of the Louisiana Purchase; in spite of these many distinctions, few Americans have ever heard his name. Yet it is probably this comparative obscurity that has allowed the Livingston houses in the Hudson Valley, such as Henry Livingston's own Oak Hill, to remain in family hands.

With the large influx of money into the region for the renovation of Montgomery Place, and what Henry Livingston calls "the finding of the Hudson Valley as another place for wealthy people from New York City," he and his kin fear that their homes, too, may become desiccated public monuments. Not that he and Winty Aldrich want to close their houses to the world; far from it. They are most hospitable with genuinely interested visitors. But they recoil at the specter of the red-velvet ropes and the "Please keep off the grass" signs, of glossy brochures touting their childhood homes as tourist attractions. "No matter how discreetly it's done," Winty insists, "when you remove the family from occupancy, something dies."

The encroachment of the red-velvet ropes may be inevitable. The times have passed these places by, and the sad truth is that it just does not make sense for them to continue as private homes forever. Turning family houses into museums may not be an entirely palatable solution, but it is surely preferable to the alternative: often, the issue is the house's physical survival. Six years ago Margaret McGrath Rockefeller bulldozed the Hermitage, a fine eighteenth-century Livingston house, built by the first son of the third lord of the manor, just four or five miles from Oak Hill. It had served as a family home for nearly two hundred years until Mrs. Rockefeller leveled it, some say in a fit of pique with municipal authorities over her taxes.

Through a system that awards tax concessions to people who open their estates to the public, even if for only very limited hours, the English have found a way to keep their stately homes in the hands of the families that built them. They, however, are the English: they have an aristocracy and we do not. To most of us, the idea of giving a person a tax break because his ancestor was somebody important just does not seem very American. Yet that does not prevent us from rooting for the Hudson Valley's Henry Livingstons and its Winty Aldriches: so long as they can continue to hold on to their past, a living link with our history endures. □

Teviotdale, now the home of Victor Cornelius. The bedroom was designed by Harrison Cultra, a decorator and former owner with a passion for animal skins.

Jamie James, a frequent contributor to Connoisseur, has recently published Roman: The Search for a Lost Roman City *(Doubleday), about an archaeological find in Cyprus.*

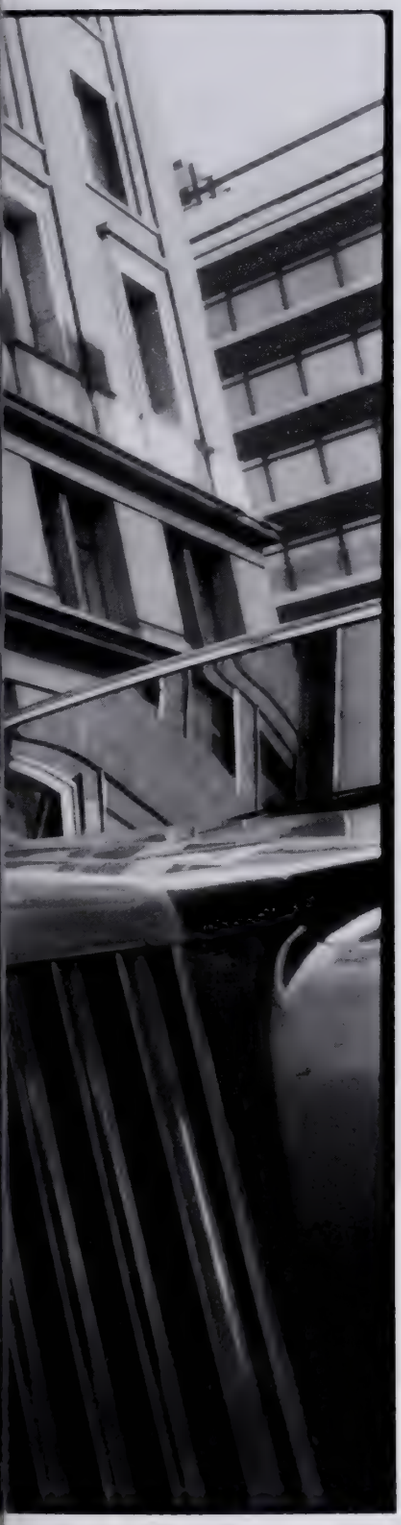
INSIDE LONDON'S SILVE

WHERE TO GO WHEN LOOKING FOR MATCHLESS TREASURE OR THE MODEST GOOD BUY

Photographs by Eugene Richards

AULTS

y Robert Emmett Ginna, Jr.



Under this bland building at Nos. 53–64 Chancery Lane, in the heart of London, is the largest trove of silver and silver plate in the world.

It is not necessary that one's house burn down, for admission to the London Silver Vaults. Still, the fact that ours had brought me to this vast Aladdin's cave full of silver, in search of a lost tablespoon, a candlesnuffer, and a fox.

The seeker at Nos. 53–64 Chancery Lane, in the City of London, will discover the largest trove of sterling silver and silver-plated artifacts in the world. The Silver Vaults lie beneath one of the oldest and most fascinating districts of London, a warren of narrow streets whose denizens—largely lawyers, clerks, and aspirants to the bar—scurry among the numerous divisions of the law courts and the four historic Inns of Court. In 1876, the Chancery Lane Safe Deposit Co. was established to secure the legal documents of barristers as well as to safeguard valuables of private persons and the stocks of silver dealers. Built deep underground, the vaults were surrounded by well-patrolled walkways.

After the London blitz, the vaults had to be rebuilt; and in 1945, the silver dealer David S. Shure reestablished his family business in them. Other dealers soon decided that their clientele—mostly trade—would follow them underground, and a number began attracting the collector and the general public as well.

Entering a lift at street level, the visitor descends to a complex of eighty vaults, where some forty members of the London Silver Vaults Tenants Association operate. One enters a series of corridors resembling those of a conventional office building, except that the many doors along them are of massive metal construction with several locks, like a bank's, sealing off the numbered vault within. While London has a number of dealers in fine silver and Sheffield plate (the Bond Street Silver Galleries, at Nos. 111–112 New Bond Street, for example, house fifteen to twenty dealers in high-quality silver), there is nothing to compare to the aggregate here. Pieces range from masterworks by the greatest English silversmiths, at awesome prices, to modest items of commonplace manufacture. The astute browser can still discover respectable bargains.

I had come with small but exacting goals. Following a fire in our home on Long Island some years ago, a neighbor's children had discovered pieces of silver buried in the rubble. Many of those salvaged were bent, scarred, or partly melted, but on our silver wedding anniversary, my wife rejoiced me by displaying the repaired Georgian silver flatware service that we had assembled in London over several years. The service for twelve was complete save for one tablespoon. All but two of the tablespoons were made by William Chawner in 1819, in George III's reign.

As I was setting off for London recently, my wife suggested that I might visit the Silver Vaults to replace the missing spoon. She reminded me, too, that we had no candlesnuffer and that our daughter still mourned her little silver fox, vanished in the inferno.

Within vault number one, the showroom of David S. Shure & Co., Mr. Sam Bulka, who came into the family business thirty years ago, sits in a tall executive chair at a desk whose top bears a midden of correspondence, account books, pots of pencils, and antique-silver beef skewers. The room, some twenty-two feet by eighteen wide, is ranged from floor to ceiling with closely ranked objects of silver. A central island supports locked glass cabinets dense with small silver works; beneath are drawers brimming with other fabrications in the precious metal.

Mr. Bulka, a genial, rumpled man wearing dark-framed glasses frequently surmounted with Georgian silver "granny" glasses, is the chairman of the London Silver Vaults Tenants Association and a voluble dispenser of silver lore, stories, quotations, and aphorisms. Asked where in the vaults one would look for the finest examples of English silver, he replies, "I can suggest one or two dealers, maybe a few more. I carry all sorts of stuff the general tourist—lots of your countrymen—wants. One could sell a few first-rank pieces now and again, or a lot of stuff, as I do, and do just about as well. But I like the business, the people, seeing so many different pieces, the chat."

Sam Bulka, with silver-plate trays, carries "all sorts of stuff for tourists."

And what might be the most memorable piece that he can recall selling? Bulka leans back and says, "A chap came in one day, an Englishman, with the branches only of two George II candelabra." He glances up as a

Raymond Walter (right) admires Irish sugar bowls, ca. 1770, with clients.

lissome young woman and her older companion enter the vault, and rises to serve them. They prove to be Italian and are looking for the silver labels that hang on decanters. In a trice Bulka is diving into drawers and fetching up labels, dropping little Italian phrases into his descriptions. The young lady is charmed, buying "Gin" and "Whisky" and asking for "Cognac." The dealer explains that the English tend to use the generic term "brandy," but he nonetheless surfaces with a "Cognac" label and is rewarded with a Mediterranean purr.

During this transaction, I browse, my eye caught by the sort of silver burner on which a maître d' flambés crepes suzette. One hundred ten pounds would put it on our sideboard. A cased set of six pretty Victorian fish knives and forks, at £75, would seem a nice present. And then, in the locked case, I spy a little silver fox at the moment when Bulka is saying, "*Arrivederci!*"

"Sorry, old man," says the proprietor, sitting down. "Business. And she was prettier than you. Anyway, this chap had the branches of two candelabra and was looking for sticks for them. He was the secretary or treasurer of one of the livery companies [the craft or trade associations that are heirs to the ancient guilds]. I stared at the branches, then went and brought out two columnar sticks that we had—same maker, same date as those branches. George II! Incredible, really. Some of these old companies have extraordinary hoards. Would you believe"—he pauses in wonder—"that they had twenty-four Hester Bateman sauceboats in that livery company's cupboards?"

"Many of my clients are specialists," says Bulka. "A man comes in regularly who collects objects relating to stamps, postage. Another chap collects Georgian boatswains' whistles. As for me, I collect miniatures

Roberts and Cadman sterling telescopic candlesticks—£4,500 at Linden.

—toys, shoes, tiny violins, chairs, things like that."

"Like the things in that case?" I ask, nodding toward the case with the tiny fox.

"Yes, those are things I didn't want or already have. They were often made by apprentices as trial work. Cheaper than the full-size object. Or as travelling sets, lo-

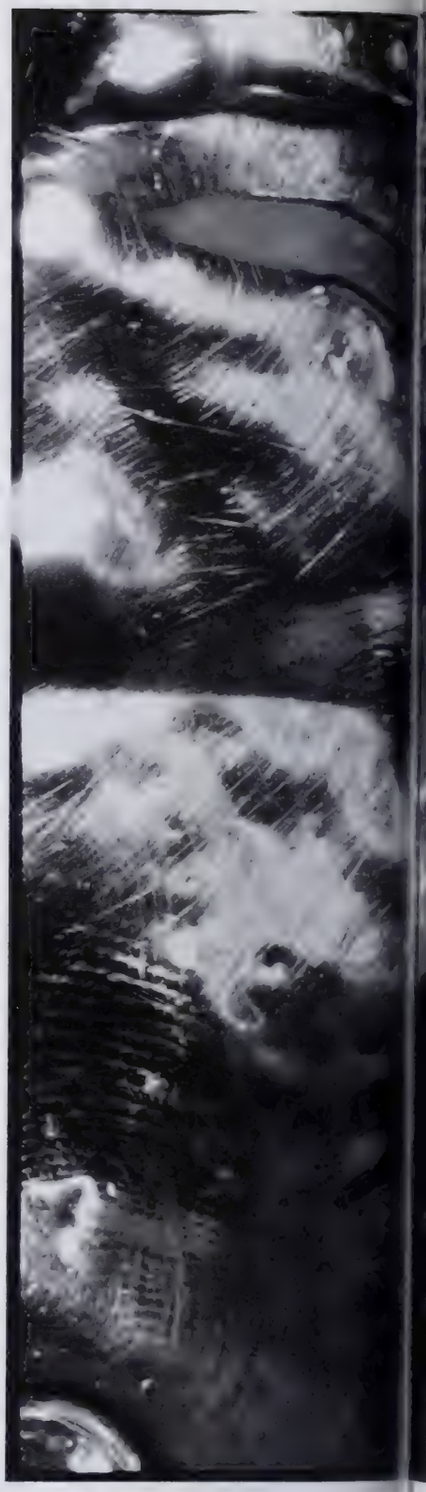
"Are all miniatures hallmarked?"

"Absolutely; even foreign pieces legally imported have an overstrike of the English hallmarks. When a dealer says an object is London made, he means that you can count on its being of first-class quality. There is still a seven-year indentured period here for the silversmith before he qualifies through examinations."

The buyer of a work of solid English silver has assurance of its quality and origin by the series of hallmarks, struck into the piece by the silversmith's dies. It is useful to know them. Since at least the sixteenth century, they have been (a) the maker's mark; (b) the mark of origin, which is that of one of some ten guilds in major cities of Britain and Ireland, or that of one of some thirty minor guilds; (c) the date letter for the year of manufacture; and (d) the assay mark, certifying the metal's silver content—92.5 percent pure in order to qualify as sterling, since 1719. A duty mark, the likeness of the sovereign's head, was stamped into each piece made between December 1, 1784, and April 30, 1899, to show that duty had been paid.

I tell Mr. Bulka of my need for a missing spoon, one of a set made in London in 1819 by William Chawner. Bulka rummages in his drawers but regrets that he does not have such a spoon to sell me. As I am leaving, I pause to look at the little silver fox—in one of several sizes in the locked case—and its price tag. I think I shall look around a bit; after all, this is vault number one.

Linden & Co. (Antiques) Ltd., in vault number seven, is presided over by Frank Linden, deputy chairman of the London Silver Vaults Tenants Association, short, balding, and bustling. Right off, he explains one attraction for the prospective purchaser of modest silver antiques: "On a normal, contemporary piece, the VAT [value-added tax] is fifteen percent of the retail price, refundable



Lovely Chester hand mirror with cherub motif is of solid silver (£98.50).

to the purchaser who takes the goods out of the country. On pieces of small value, it is negligible, so we don't pass the tax on to the customer."

But many of the objects sold by Linden & Co. produce a hefty VAT, like the telescopic candlesticks he hands me now. Roberts and Cadman of Sheffield, who invented the tele-

scopic candlestick, made them during the reign of George III. "Cadman did most of his work in Sheffield plate," says Linden, "because so little silver was required. But he did some in solid silver, like these."

In Sheffield, in 1742, Thomas Boulsover had developed the process by which silver plate could be fused by great heat to articles fashioned of copper. Then, in 1840, George Richards Elkington invented a way of electroplating silver onto copper. "Roberts and Belk of Sheffield started working early with the Elkington process," says Linden. "I had seen a number of their fine tea services made in plate that way. Then I saw one that they had made in solid silver dated 1867, and I bought it.

"One day, an American couple saw the tea service in the shop, went home, thought about it, and wrote for it."

"And the price?"

"Three thousand seven hundred pounds, sterling."

When I walk into the establishment of William Walter Antiques Ltd., in vaults three and five, I feel like the bedazed wanderer in a labyrinth who has suddenly arrived at the goal: a dazzling array of silver treasures stacked shelf on gleaming shelf. Among the firm's American clients are museums in Birmingham and Richmond. Here the silver fancier can examine a number of masterpieces by Hester Bateman or Paul Storr. I goggle at a chaste punch bowl by Paul Brown of Dublin, fashioned in 1739, with a price tag of £30,000. There is a Commonwealth tankard from which I

would enjoy quaffing my ale; it was made by Daniel Rutty of London in 1655, and I can take it home, duty free—as one can all antiques at least 100 years old—for £7,800. A stunning pair of George III candelabra by John Scofield is for sale at £22,500, though one could have four shorter but handsome candlesticks made in the reign of George II by William Gould for £12,800.

Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Walter are a polished pair; tall, urbane, he delights in sharing his knowledge of silver. I am curious whether a vogue for certain kinds of silver objects affects their prices.

"Oh, indeed," says Walter. "Snuffboxes, once the rage, are off. Now, candlesticks have jumped madly."

The very top-quality silver pieces appreciated 20 percent in 1986–87, according to auction estimates, and the next two-thirds increased 10 percent. Walter concurs that such extraordinary appreciation at the top of the market pulls up the rest. Yet none of the dealers I speak with recommends the purchase of fine silver antiques strictly as an investment, and most echo the advice of Raymond Walter: "The most important thing is to buy only if you *like* the piece. The second is quality. If you have to decide between two equal pieces, then buy the better name [i.e., the maker]. The Arabs' fault is that they buy the name only. You are paying a tremendous amount for a great maker."

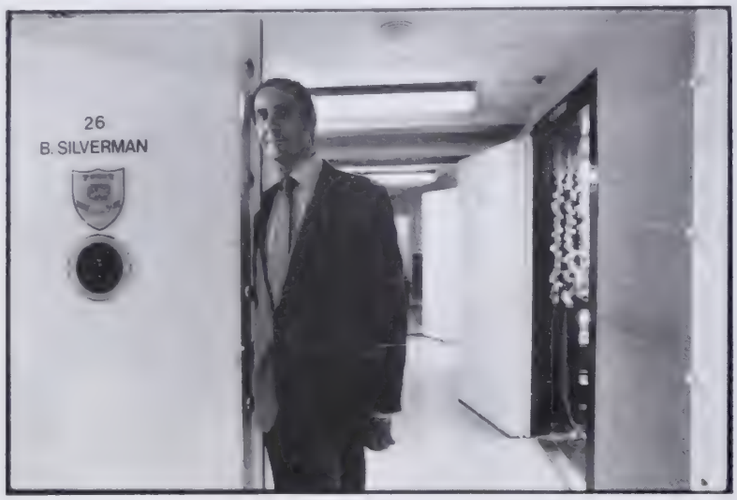
As an example, he points out a fine soup tureen made in 1748 that is for sale at £13,500. Then he shows me another, saying, "This one, by Paul Storr, from 1798, is £28,500. If it were by Paul de Lamerie, it could be £100,000." Pausing, he smiles and says, "When the price is trebled or quadrupled because of the maker's name, make sure that the maker's mark is *clear*."

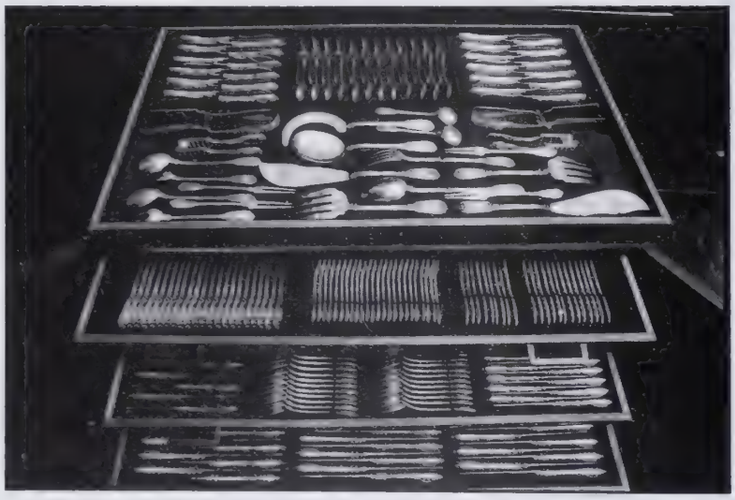
In these surroundings, I do not have the temerity to bring up my quest for a tablespoon.

Vault number twenty-one, the premises of Nat Leslie Ltd., has rather the appearance of a flea market, with many delicious surprises. I acquire a pair of Victorian sugar tongs wrought from two figures described as Apostles. Here, an inquiry about the spoon brings forth a tablespoon made in London in 1825 by William Eley and William Chawner; price: £57.50. I note it down and move on.

I halt at vault number twenty-six, the firm of B. Silverman, and Robin Silverman beckons me in as he speaks on the phone. Many of the objects displayed on shelves and tables suggest a prosperous trade. I inspect a nine-basket epergne, dated 1764, for £26,500.

One of a line of Silvermans who are silver men—Robin's partner is his uncle Sidney, and he expects his son to follow him into the business—he mentions that their business is largely wholesale and that many of their customers are foreign. "Italy accounts for much of our business," says Robin. "The Italians are interested in highly decorated Victorian silver. The Germans are buying good classical English silver." Silverman, like most of the dealers with whom I spoke, likes to talk about silver and is helpful and candid. When I inquire about people who wish to buy for investment, he replies crisply, "We try to put them off." He does buy for certain collectors: "I know what they want and keep my eye out for them."





Robin Silverman at his shop, where this 516-piece French service sold for £45,000.

When Silverman says, "Our specialty for retail is antique silver flatware," and points to an immense chest of silver that he is just shipping, I hazard a tolerable to the silver spoon I seek. Forthwith, he turns to his drawers and hands me two examples. One was made in 1803 by William Eley and William Fearn, who worked with William Chawner. I am tickled that it would be associated, yet different from our set. I like its condition and the price, £40. It is soon mine.

Besotted with silver and working my way toward the vaults' entrance, I find the very candlesnuffer we want at Jules Golding and Co. Ltd., in vault number two, a small shop with a variety of pieces at modest prices. My selection has a handle of old Sheffield plate in the fiddle, thread, and shell pattern and costs £21. "I cannot carry candlesnuffers in solid silver at £400," says Ann Golding. "Who is going to pay that?"

Minutes before the vault doors are closed and locked, I nip into David S. Shure & Co. Sam Bulka, who is on the phone, knows a customer when he sees one and calls out to his assistant, "Open the case so this gentleman can see that fox, the little one."

In memory I compare it with the antique fox I bought in Dublin for a daughter who insisted that *she* was a fox and lived in an imaginary vulpine world where her friends were named Jell E. Fox and Phoom E. Fox. In my recollection that fox had a benign mask. This has a wilder mien. My hand clasps it.

Sam Bulka puts his granny glasses over his spectacles and studies the hallmarks. "BSE," he reads out. "Contemporary, by Bob and Sian Eade. First-rate sculptor, he is. Lovely little creature." Looking at the tag, which says £40, he wraps the piece in tissue, saying, "You've been down here a week. One of us, now. Shall we say ten pounds off?" □

Robert Emmett Ginna is a writer, filmmaker, and editor, based in New Hampshire.

This splendid fifty-ounce silver coffee biggin by Paul Storr (1809) can be had for £7,800 at William Walter Antiques.

Curly wears a pleated taffeta cape; her blond friend, an embroidered toque, a fox-trimmed cashmere stole, and *fer forgé* earrings. Observing from a safe distance, a stran

Isabel Canovas has invented a ne

By Elsa Klensch

HAIR MARK THOMPSON. MAKEUP BRIGITTE HYMANS. COORDINATOR MARC WALSH. WARDROBE ASSISTANT CHARMAINE SERAFI. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON PAGE 150

in her hair and a yellow purse for her Métro tickets.

The Finishing Touches

Like many great fashion concepts, this one started in Paris, and if it continues to gain steam it could well change the way women dress in the coming decade. The concept is one of designer accessories—collections of hats, scarves, belts, jewelry, shoes, and so forth, created by designers who make a specialty of them. Up until now, fashion accessories have been treated as a sideline by clothing designers. Today, however, a handful of innovative, accessories-first designers are hard at work—most notably, Maud Frizon, Paloma Picasso, Dominique Aurientis, Frances Patiky Stein, and Isabel Canovas. Each does a complete and distinctive collection of such things as bags, shoes, hats, gloves, and jewelry for spring and fall, selling them as a "look"—a way of transforming simply styled clothes into striking and individual ensembles.

All these women's collections contain interesting and original pieces, but the first to do it was Isabel Canovas, and the most extravagant, amusing, and expensive of the collections are hers. She has the gift of the great couturiers, putting her stamp on everything she designs. And to make certain she will never be confused with anyone else, she sells her bold, brilliant pieces nowhere but in her own boutiques in Paris, New York, and Madrid.

"Accessories are the only area where design can be imaginative, outrageous," she says. "A fur coat is boring, but a fur border on a cashmere stole is romantic. Six colors on a huge earring is eye-catching; on a dress it would be exhausting. A beautifully tied bow on a glove is luxurious; on a blouse, old-fashioned. The same dress worn with different accessories not only looks completely different; it makes the woman *feel* completely different."

Isabel Canovas is the very embodiment of her concept, it seems to me as we lunch together in the Relais restaurant of the Plaza-Athénée—she is sleek, sophisticated, and superbly chic in the simplest of little black dresses. The smoke of her cigarette curls around the champagne glass as she sips. Her green eyes sparkle; her throaty voice vibrates with enthusiasm. She is absorbed in conversation, but no one in the room is unaware of her. Finally the woman at the next table can contain herself no longer: "Please tell me where you bought your wonderful jewelry."

Isabel smiles. It is a question she loves to answer: "At the Isabel Canovas boutique, right here on Avenue Montaigne."

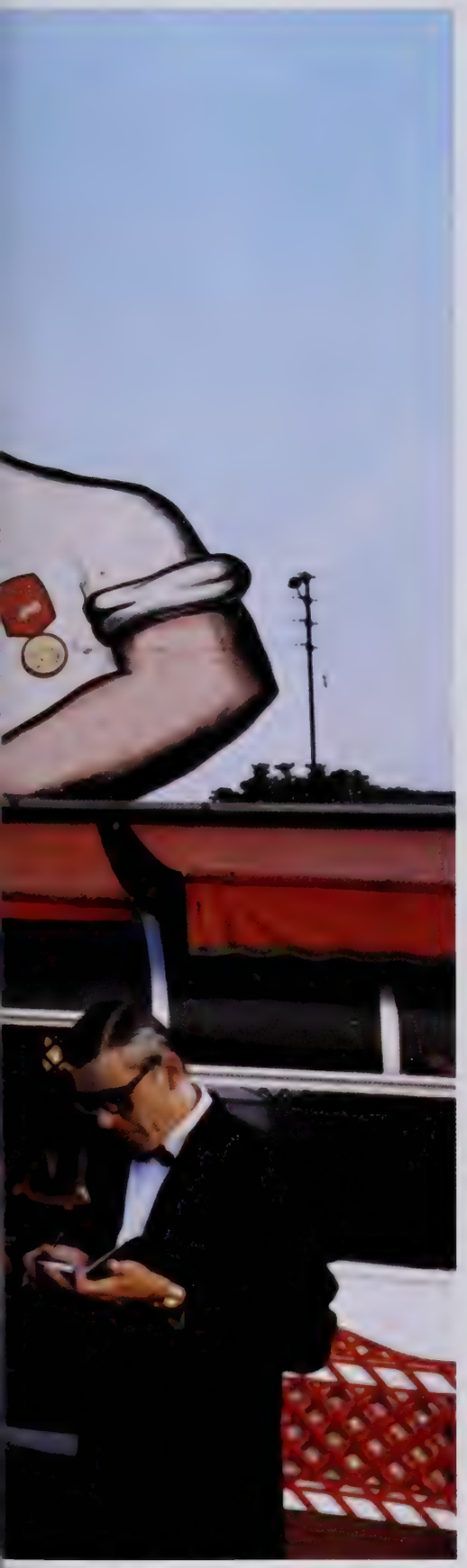
What makes Isabel and her jewelry so electrifying is her tongue-in-cheek attitude to fashion and her utter enjoyment of it all. Her designs are not so extreme as the pieces Elsa Schiaparelli did in the 1930s (butterfly brooch, viper necklace, jeweled phoenix), but they have a flamboyance seen nowhere else today. Long drop earrings in the form of three tortoises swing against her neck. The first, in gold studded with rhinestones, munches on a leaf; the others tag along behind. Three more follow one another in a circle set on the shoulder of her dress. From the charm bracelets on her wrists dangles an assortment of fauna—mice, fish, flies, lizards, more tortoises. These creatures belong to the collection Isabel introduced this fall.

She may be irreverent in her approach to fashion but is dead serious about her business and the concept on which she has built it. The modern way to dress, she firmly believes, is to let the accessory create the look. She designs a few basic clothes—T-shirt dresses and sweaters in cashmere or silk jersey—and brings them to glamorous life with extraordinary jewelry, belts, flowers, gloves, hats, shawls, scarves, even umbrellas. The pieces are admittedly costly. Isabel's charm bracelet goes for $1,350;

ay of dressing

Photographs by Gilles Peress/Magnum

Having a ball in Canovas's cashmere dress with harlequin and pantomime earrings; round her neck a collection of masks. Right: She stoops to conquer wearing not much m



lk jersey shawl trimmed with bows and tassels.

her simple cashmere dress, for $1,975; the black lizard handbag she carries, for $2,550.

Canovas does two collections of accessories a year, each with a different theme. Her fall collection last year was inspired by a book of Russian icons—translucent enamel and shimmering pearls set in the gold filigree of a Romanov crown, tasseled suede gauntlets, and enormous pleated silk-taffeta capes dramatic enough for a ball at the Winter Palace.

A Caribbean vacation in Mustique launched this fall's collection of animals and their prey. Sitting in the garden, Isabel spotted a tortoise eating leaves, a lizard flicking his tongue to catch a fly, and the cat walking attentively beside the goldfish pond. Now they have been captured for good on enameled, jewel-studded pins, earrings, necklaces, and charms. A crimson lizard dangles from an earring fashioned like a glistening black fly. A smiling gold cat clutching three plump fish in his jaws makes a pin. A silky black fox mask on a high-crowned toque holds a fistful of iridescent cock feathers in its teeth.

Such wit is a Canovas hallmark—one sees it again in a parade of embroidered ants marching across a pink peau de soie evening bag—but her accessories can be as basic as a perfect black lizard pump with a three-inch heel, or as alluring as a re-embroidered lace mantilla trimmed with red, yellow, and black silk cabbage roses.

She is no less feminine than she is original. "I hate fashion that makes women look like men," she says. "Modern life may be fast-paced, difficult, stressful, but the joy of being a woman is being able to express our individuality." She loves everything that is extravagant, rich, and exotic—lace, tassels, fringes, fans, passementerie, jet, embroidery, silk flowers, feathers, fur, fringe, astrakhan.

A bow on a blouse is boring; on a glove, glamorous.

She searches for the best materials: the softest suede, the finest straws, the plushest velvets, the most unusual skins, the crispest *cloqué* organza to make the fullest, richest flounce on a deep shawl. Her colors are brilliant—fuchsia, violet, shocking pink, gold, emerald, scarlet—all toned to work superbly with one another.

Canovas had no academic design training. She attributes much of her taste, her flair for design, and her looks to her Spanish father, a noted textile designer in Paris and a close collaborator of the great couturier Cristobal Balenciaga. She loved watching her father sketch: "If he hadn't had a family to support I'm sure he would have devoted his life to serious painting." She considers herself the most Spanish of his four children and indeed looks it, with her sleek, pulled-back hair, her strong, even features, her serene oval face.

Isabel attended a lycée in Paris and was

She loves everything rich, extravagant, and exotic.

graduated from the Institut des Sciences Politiques, but she learned the accessories business in the old-fashioned way, on the job. After an early marriage and the birth of a daughter, now twenty-one, she went to work for Christian Dior. She designed accessories for the collections—so well that Louis Vuitton briefly hired her. A year later she returned to Dior, where she collaborated with Marc Bohan.

Working for a fashion house, even Dior, was not a totally happy experience. Canovas felt that accessories were treated like poor cousins: "Marc Bohan was primarily interested in the clothes. It's understandable, but it was frustrating."

Another problem was that while French craftsmen are second to none, most of the Dior accessories were made in Italy. Canovas could not use many of the French craftsmen whose work she greatly admired. Moreover, it was plain that the boutique customers were always on the lookout for new accessories. "They wanted pieces that were individual, that would distinguish their own personalities, that didn't have designers' names on them."

While she was still at Dior, Canovas met the man who would become her second husband, the international businessman Michael Grunelius. He was quick to recognize her talent and encourage her ambition. He listened attentively to her theory that the sort of fashion rich women wanted was changing, and no one was paying attention. A man who loves taking risks, he urged her to follow her instincts and design a collection of accessories to be sold exclusively in her own boutiques.

She opened the first in September 1982 in Paris. One of the first customers to walk in was Lauren Bacall. In September 1985 she opened in New York, at 743 Madison Avenue, and in September 1988 in Madrid, at 29 Calle de la Hermosilla. Canovas plans to add more boutiques, but slowly. Los Angeles is a possibility; so is Milan.

Each boutique has the same design, with the look of a blue-mirrored jewel box. Canovas calls it "the blue of the night." The floors are paved with blue granite from Brazil, the walls lined with lapis lazuli–blue display cabinets. The resulting ambience is exotic and mysterious.

While Grunelius minds the financial end, he also takes an active interest in the creative side of the business. "He's always coming up with suggestions. He first persuaded me to make shoes, even though I had to travel to Brittany to find the factory that would give me the quality I wanted. The artisans are such perfectionists there that they wear white gloves while making my shoes. He likes outrageous designs, too. This fall I mentioned a half-formed idea of doing a handbag that looked like a birdcage. I was doubtful, but he insisted—it doesn't matter how many we sell, he said; it's witty, it's modern."

Jewelry is what sells best. Canovas says many rich women prefer wearing fashion jewelry to the real thing, which is risky to wear, even riskier to travel with. Besides, it is generally small and lacks the impact of an outscale fashion piece.

"Our two big design successes," she says, "have been our charm bracelets and

Reversible shawls, one satin, the other organza, worn ov

n cat earrings. Left: Relaxed, in a bowed choker and lizardy bracelet, with a gold lamé umbrella, just in case, and satin pumps—what a color!—embroidered with ants.

the masks I do as pins, earrings, and charms. Women like jewelry that moves and makes a noise. That's what makes the charm bracelets so successful. The masks are dramatic. We've done many different types, from African primitives to the Italian commedia dell'arte.

"The best sellers are earrings, big, bold drop earrings in plastic or metal studded with *faux* stones. Pins are next because they're so versatile. They can be put on a hat or belt or glove as well as a lapel. Necklaces are out of favor, not because women don't like them but because fashion magazines rarely feature them today."

To get away from the hectic world of fashion, Canovas and her husband go to Normandy, where she spent her childhood summers with her family (including her brother Manuel, the well-known fabric designer), delighting in the chalk cliffs, the Atlantic winds, and the pebble beaches. Twenty years ago she bought what had once been the rectory in a tiny village. Over the years she has made it into a comfortable weekend retreat with plenty of display space for her father's drawings.

Once the house was in order, she and Grunelius began on the garden, which now boasts thirty varieties of old-fashioned roses. "We're trying to capture the spirit of two hundred years ago. I think the point of a garden is to make a place to think and be alone. I rarely design when I'm down there. We've made it so tranquil it's impossible to think about fashion. I need the smell of Paris to work."

When she is working, Canovas's dedication to detail ranks with her passion for roses. She and her staff design in the very atmosphere in which her customers finally see the pieces: both floors of her offices and workrooms in Paris are decorated in the same blue as the boutiques.

She is tireless in getting exactly what she wants from the craftsmen. "The most difficult part of the job is the enormous variety of techniques that the different accessories require. I use dozens of small factories scattered around Paris—for gilding jewelry, re-embroidering lace, making gloves, molding hats. Some have only ten or twenty employees, but I visit them all and explain precisely what I want done.

This season I had an idea for some glass beads. I wasn't sure how to make them, but I wanted them to have texture as well as shine—to look handmade. I visited the woman who makes beads for me. As usual, she said it couldn't be done." Then, noticing some jeweler's tools on her worktable, she suggested the bead maker put the glass rod into the flame and when the bead formed to play with it with her tweezers. The woman twisted the beads, squeezed them, added small pieces to them, and turned them into the shapes Isabel had envisaged. One bead looks as if it has another bead inside it. Another has tiny granulations of glass on the surface. Another has an irregular pattern etched in it. "Together we invented four, six, eight new beads," says Isabel. "They have everything I wanted—the shape, the colors, the three-dimensional look that make them irresistible." □

Elsa Klensch, CNN's fashion correspondent, is a contributing editor of Connoisseur.

The modern way to dress: let the accessories make the look.

Stripped for action in a Spanish charm bracelet and cat-am

e has discarded her organza shawl, mink-trimmed suede gloves, and birdcage purse. Left: Blowsy silk roses on a mantilla, the mask necklace now worn as a bracelet.

This [illegible] down one of the long runs at Davos [illegible] provide it all— thrills for the [illegible] lasting fun for the e[illegible]

NO STRAIN, NO PAIN

Eleven of Europe's greatest ski runs for the intermediate

One of the supreme glories of the European Alps is the quantity of long, long runs—some take a whole, languid day to cover—for the intermediate skier. They are beautiful, encompassing a variety of terrain. They boost your confidence: look how far you have come, how much topography you have conquered. They offer thrilling tests of your ability. In a word, they are fun.

Because they stretch out so far, these runs must be skied with a guide, or in a class, or at least with others who know their way, because most European ski areas tend to be quite casual about signs and markings. And while you can more or less follow the other skiers, as you get down toward the bottom, there is no way to know when to hook a right and dive between two barns in Farmer Bruderer's backyard. If you miss that turn, you will not be in mortal danger, but you might end up in the wrong village with a mile of poling at the end of your trip in order to get to the train or bus station where you will catch a lift back to your starting place.

Here, beginning with the magnificent runs at Davos-Klosters, in Switzerland, are eleven of the best, most enjoyable runs in Europe—or, for that matter, the world.

The first time I made the run from atop the Weissfluhjoch, at 9,000 feet and across the Parsenn range, in the Swiss Alps, all the way over to Küblis, eight miles away, was some fifteen years ago. I was rusty, not having skied in years. I was also used to mountain trails of a mile or two at most, most runs much shorter. The prospect of skiing a run of eight miles—that is, eight miles without a lift—was dazzling and a bit daunting.

I made the great run in about two and a half hours. Along the way, I paused over and over to marvel at the glistening peaks, the shifting light, the absolute quiet of a clearing in the woods. The run was superb. I felt liberated from the boring, little trails to which most mountains condemn intermediates. I will never forget my exhilaration as I climbed aboard the huge red train that would take me back to my hotel, up the valley. Nor will I forget how my pride was ignited by travelers from distant Zurich on the train in their suits and dresses when they asked me, the flushed and triumphant explorer, how the snow was up there.

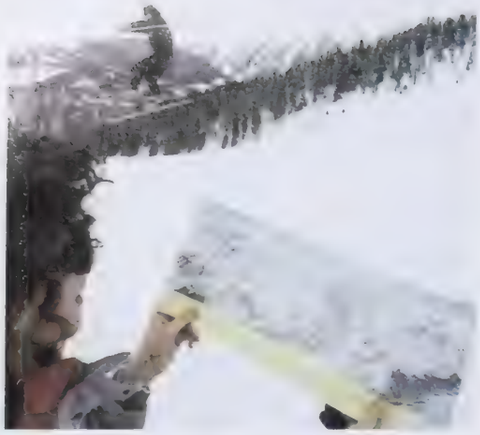
Now I am taking the same run again, and in truth, it seems easy. It does not have steep drops, as though the Swiss had calibrated just the right amount of decline to keep it interesting yet leave it manageable for lesser skiers. Indeed, we are gliding, my guide Lucas and I, linking wide turns, carving an S-trail down this broad, groomed piste. Many other skiers are around us, moving at a slower pace. That is the kind of run it is, one that allows you to choose your own speed.

We soar for about two miles, until we reach the stone Kreuzweg hut. Here, at 7,500 feet, at one of the crossroads of the skiing world, we pause to make our decision. Clumps of skiers, their maps out, are doing the same. We can bear right and head back to the village of Klosters, where I am staying, about three miles away. Or, we can take a left and go for one of the three longer runs: to Serneus, some five miles off; to Saas, about six miles down; or to Küblis, seven miles away.

Lucas thinks the snow would be best on the Saas run. Within the last week, he has skied to the other two villages, and the very bottom stretches have been worn thin. Saas seems fine to me, and off we go; the terrain begins to vary wonderfully. Open stretches of piste, similar to those we have just come across, now lead to cliffs—steep faces with moguls to work through—and on to a long run-out and then into the woods. We are returning to tree level.

For a couple of miles, we cruise along,

Photographs by Mark Jenkinson



To get the most out of the runs, hire a good guide.

adjusting our speed to the changing conditions. After a long run through the giant evergreens, we stop. Down below is the Conterser Schwendi, a large log house, inhabited in the summer by farmers who bring their cows up to graze. Today it is filled with skiers, maybe three hundred of them, crowding the deck in front, heads back, eyes shuttered to the pale but strong winter sun, drinks steaming before them. As we take off our skis, a New England accent rings through the air: "What's the matter with these people? Doesn't anybody ski in this country?" In fact, they are all skiing, but their skiing philosophy is related not to the number of runs they can make in a day but to the pleasure they can absorb from each one.

There is no thirst like an Alpine thirst when you sweat heavily and the air is bone dry. I toss off two icy *Apfelsäfte*, the local bubbly apple juice; Lucas has a coffee. Before we get too comfortable, we are back on our skis. Now the run is all through the trees, interspersed with clearings. It is steeper than I expected, and we cruise at a lower speed. Each bend, each new ridge offers choices. Lucas leads the way, picking a path where the snow looks freshest.

We begin to encounter more and more of the small wooden huts that shelter farmers in the summer. Soon we sniff the smell that often signals that a run in the Alps is almost over, the smell of manure. We are approaching farmyards.

As we head back into the woods for the final descent, the snow becomes heavier, wetter. We push through to a long, narrow catwalk over the Landquart River, darkly [illegible] through the snow. We must ski across the shaky bridge. I follow Lucas [illegible] we started when he pulled [illegible] the trail.

[illegible] Lucas points to the sky. Remarkably, as a final grace note to our long, blissful mountain experience, soaring high above us is an eagle.

"My first," I tell Lucas. "I've never seen a live one before."

"That's what a good Swiss ski guide does," he says, smiling. "Leads you over the mountain, gives you a run of twelve kilometers, and leaves you with something a little special at the end."

Before the week was out, we also made the runs to Serneus, a village of ancient stone farmhouses, and all the way to Küblis, eight miles away, downhill. They are wonderful runs. Indeed, they can also be enjoyed by expert skiers, many of whom love to take a half day off from the steeps to show off or relax on the glorious intermediate runs.

Whether you stay in Davos or Klosters is a matter of personal taste. Davos is something like a small city in the mountains. While I have enjoyed its large, grand hotels, redolent of Thomas Mann and *The Magic Mountain,* I much prefer Klosters, which remains, because development has been carefully monitored, a village.

VALLÉE BLANCHE (CHAMONIX), FRANCE

This is the longest run in the Alps, over twelve miles, and one of the most splendid. You start at over 1,200 feet, right in front of Mont Blanc, and at an easy pace you can ski for over four hours before winding all the way back down to Chamonix.

Though not difficult, the run is dangerous; it requires a guide. The first third of the run is across glaciers that are studded with crevasses, and only a guide can pick them out and lead you around them. The Vallée Blanche is also awesome, offering terrain unlike any other I have skied; it eerily suggests the surface of the moon. Sheer peaks loom over you; massive, gaping crevasses of green ice sparkle around you. The effect is overwhelming.

As a result, the Vallée Blanche seems more difficult than it is. It is common for skiers to freeze, to revert in form and drop back a level in their skiing ability without being aware of their mistake. Even so, it remains manageable for an intermediate.

Skiable only in good weather, the run is best with a break about halfway down for a picnic lunch. The day you first ski the Vallée Blanche will be one of your most memorable days of skiing.

Chamonix is also a center for off-piste skiing, long day trips that you make with a guide far beyond the regular trails, over the border into Switzerland or Italy. Some of the most popular journeys are within the intermediate range.

The town is a modest place—with no fancy hotels but many moderately priced smaller places—and the restaurants provide good, simple fare. The bus ride from the Geneva airport takes about an hour and a half.

ZERMATT, SWITZERLAND

Over Zermatt bends the famous Matterhorn, its symbol and protector. Though the good burghers of the village never mention it, they actually share this peak. On the back side lies Cervinia, a glitzy Italian village that possesses miles of its own pistes.

There is a fabulous intermediate run from the top of the mountain on the Zermatt side. You start at the top of the Theodul glacier and wind about five miles all the way down the Italian side into Cervinia. On a sunny day, time it so that you have lunch on the terrace of a *trattoria* in the village, and then make a few runs on Cervinia's trails before heading back up to the Swiss side again.

Another splendid run is the Kelle. It starts near the top of the Gornergrat lift, in the middle of Zermatt's three ski areas, and cuts across to the Sunnegga area. Reasonably challenging for an intermediate, it runs for better than three miles. Best of all, I have never found it crowded—a quality to be cherished in one of the most popular ski resorts in Switzerland.

Zermatt is the quintessential Alpine village, like the fairyland place where Heidi was born. About four hours by train from Geneva, it permits no cars. Once there, you walk or take a sleigh. It has a full range of luxury hotels and restaurants. But be warned: Zermatt in recent years has often suffered from overcrowding. If you go, avoid all major holidays.

VERBIER, SWITZERLAND

Although Verbier is known for its vastness and the steep pitch of its slopes, it also offers special treats to intermediates. One of them starts near Verbier at the St. Bernard pass. It is a run of more than an hour, fairly challenging in parts, and it ends up in the village of Etroubles, in Italy. Since no lift exists to carry you back up the Italian side, you have no choice but to indulge yourself with a large Italian lunch and wait for the bus to shuttle you back.

La Marlenaz is easily reached from the top of the Savoleyres lift. It spins out for more than four miles, and if you hit it in springtime, just after the sun has softened up the snow in the morning, it will give you one of the Alps' best experiences—skiing on the sugary *neige de printemps,* which makes intermediate skiers feel like experts. Amazingly, the run tends to be

he tree line at Davos-Klosters: even
annot ski powder snow, a broad,
piste will let you soar happily downhill
nuch as eight miles.

[illegible] of other skiers.

With the right, spring conditions, your guide might also lead you over the back of the mountain to the village of Mache. Before leaving, he will call ahead, so after you have skied for half a day you will be met by the owner of the Aiguilles Rouges bistro, in tiny Mache, and his minibus. After a memorable lunch, he will ferry you to the nearest lift as well.

Verbier is an unpretentious village about three hours by train from Geneva, developed since the fifties, carefully. It does not have the charm of other, older Alpine villages, but it has magnificent skiing and lends itself to family holidays: about 80 percent of its rooms are in rentable apartments and chalets.

VAL D'ISERE–TIGNES, FRANCE

Like Verbier, this enormous area is a magnet for expert skiers. Offering some seventy miles of trails, many of them steep and demanding, Val d'Isère also has an unusual amount of off-piste skiing. But three-quarters of the regular pistes are marked for intermediates and lower. Most of the time, this means skiing from one peak to another, popping on and off a vast network of lifts. Normally, once you take a lift up in the morning, you do not have any need to ski down to the village until the end of the day.

An exception is the Piste du Col run, which starts up on the Pissaillas glacier at about 10,000 feet. With six small lifts, the glacier is used for summer skiing, but during the winter it is the starting point for a run of some six miles down to Le Fornet, a good, long run that even a low intermediate can enjoy.

Even longer is the run from La Grande Motte, at over 11,000 feet. This sits closer to the town of Tignes than to Val d'Isère, so from Val you ski your way over, connecting with four or five lifts. Then you head down; and, depending on how leisurely you want to be, it could be your only run of the day. It is often done with a stop in Tignes for lunch, or you can enjoy intermediate pistes the whole route back down to La Daille and the heart of Val.

Neither Val d'Isère nor Tignes offers much in the way of ambience and architecture. I much prefer Val, where there are plenty of comfortable hotels and restaurants. Tignes is one of those odd French [illegible] concrete superblocks on the side [illegible]. Still, the skiing more than [illegible] for the aesthetics.

[illegible] *luxuriously and senior editor* [illegible] *frequently writes about*

This is the Conterser Schwendi, one of the many places to stop along the great runs at Davos-Klosters for a drink, a snack, or just a leisurely rest in the sun.

A diplomat's daughter, Mitsuko Uchida began her serious musical education in Vienna at age twelve. Ten years later, she realized she had to leave: "Tradition was all, tradition was always right."

A *Mind of* Her Own

The education of the brilliant, Japanese-born pianist Mitsuko Uchida

By Charles Michener

Mitsuko Uchida is on the phone, saying, "I went to *Figaro* last night at the Royal Opera, and it was horrid! The tempi were either a little too fast or a little too slow, *ja*? And the jealousies were Tchaikovsky jealousies, not Mozart jealousies." She laughs, the sound high and unexpectedly girlish.

This report on an unsatisfactory *Marriage of Figaro* in London tells much about this extraordinary woman. It is spirited, strongly felt, exacting in its distinctions, witty. For students of accents, it is also something of a puzzle. "Horrid!" is from the mouth of a proper Englishwoman. "*Ja?*" sounds like an Austrian academic. And the girlish laugh? Unmistakably Japanese. Well, Mitsuko Uchida is all of these and more: a Japanese woman schooled in Vienna who lives in London, where she has emerged as one of the most intriguing musical personalities in many years, a pianist whose way with the composer of *Figaro* has seemed that of one possessed by him.

Uchida's complete cycle of Mozart sonatas at Wigmore Hall in 1982 is now something of a legend. Here was none of the tinkling, music-box prettiness that has led critics to dismiss these pieces as immature. Eschewing sparkle for electrification, Uchida played them with such intensity, such understanding of their personal, mercurial nature that their central importance in Mozart's development could not be doubted again. From the fall of 1985 to the summer of 1986, the hottest musical tickets in London were for her next Mozart cycle—all twenty-one piano concertos, with the English Chamber Orchestra, which she conducted from the keyboard. The *Financial Times* critic David Murray summed up many of Uchida's special qualities in this epic achievement: "The magnificent C Major Concerto [K. 503] was exciting, febrile, prickly. . . . The incessant twists from major key to minor and back were sharply expressive and nervy. The piano tacked between a tight, brazen *forte* and a trembling pianissimo. It was like hearing the music under brilliant strobe-lighting." In a film made for Britain's Channel 4 the pianist talked of her total immersion in the composer's music during the nine-month concert season. "I couldn't read a book," she recalled. "I couldn't even listen to music at all. I simply felt I had to look at the score of Mozart concertos and then there is nothing to come between me and that piece of paper. . . . Mozart's music is like the air. When you are working on a lot of Mozart, he is everywhere."

Uchida is now well beyond any obsession with Mozart. Her international career is burgeoning with programs that reveal an unusually wide-ranging brilliance, from Beethoven to Bartók. In the *New Yorker*, Andrew Porter hailed her first New York recital (with a program of Mozart, followed by Schoenberg, Schubert, and Cho-

Photographs by Noelle Hoeppe

The conductor Jeffrey Tate is Uchida's partner in a project to record the complete Mozart piano concertos.

pin) as one of "high distinction, and one that filled its listeners with joy."

Few performers have such vivid impact onstage. Uchida makes quicksilver entrances, her striding, lithe figure fluid in shimmering trousers and blouse—the work of a top Japanese or Italian designer—her full black hair free about her shoulders. There is no china doll in her beauty; with its luminous, expressive eyes and finely chiseled aquilinity, it is noble rather than pretty. At the keyboard she is an intensely dramatic figure, her torso, arms, hands, and highly mobile face eloquently depicting her involvement with the music.

We first met in a fashionable London restaurant near the tiny mews house off Portobello Road where she lives with an Englishman who is an officer in the foreign service. Listening to this immediately engaging woman talk about her remarkable odyssey from a childhood in postwar Japan, I sensed that in the vastness of Western music, with its ever-changing frontiers, she had found the perfect country in which to exercise her enormous talent for exploration, discipline, and expression, her drive to be fully herself.

Her journey began "in innocence." Her father had been a diplomat during the war in Berlin, where he had acquired a love of Beethoven and Mozart. Returning to their home in Tokyo, he insisted that his children [illegible] piano. The youngest of these children, [illegible] was born in 1944 [illegible] "Very [illegible] Japanese [illegible] Japanese [illegible] very dextrous, like many Japanese, but it didn't mean anything to me. In any case there was no way of knowing whether one was really talented or not. I suppose if my parents had any hopes for me it was that I would become an important piano teacher, get decently married, produce a child or two, and live within the framework of Japanese society." She laughed and added, "What I'm doing now, it ain't!"

When she was twelve, her father was posted as ambassador to Vienna, and "everything changed." "The week after we arrived he simply declared, 'I have arranged an appointment with the head of the music academy.' It was entirely his choice. I didn't want to go. I couldn't speak a word of German or English—I didn't know where I was. But there was no strong reason to say no." Soon she was studying with Richard Hauser, "a great teacher." "He demanded of me the same as from the twenty-year-old students—you had to play by heart every new piece by the second lesson or you were out."

When she was sixteen, Mitsuko's father was named ambassador to West Germany, and she was faced with a decision: "to go as a dutiful daughter or stay on my own and study music." Her time in Vienna had not been happy. "I was an introverted kid, and I spent all my spare time reading everything in Japanese. Part of me wanted to learn German; the other part didn't." But she chose to stay—"a very big step." "I simply thought, What have I done all this work for? If I had gone with my parents I would have just become the attractive ambassador's daughter who plays the piano terribly well. My father never pushed me

As a child, Uchida hated being asked to play for friends.

Days before a recording session, in Tate's London home, he and Uchida review Mozart's Concerto no. 20.

to become a professional, but sometimes he tried to make me play for family and friends. How I loathed it! It almost made me quit music. I hated being told to play even if I didn't feel like it. I would never ask any child to play unless the child wanted to."

For the next six years, living alone in a youth hostel, Mitsuko studied at the academy. At twenty, she won first prize in the Beethoven Competition in Vienna. The following year, she took second at the Chopin Competition in Warsaw. When she was twenty-two she decided to leave Vienna. "Tradition was all, tradition was always right. It was very good for me to know it because I had come from a country without tradition in Western music. And of course I learned German, which I think is essential for playing the great classical repertoire. But my god, it was such a mold! Especially about Mozart. It was all dos and don'ts. *Forte* was never to be played really *forte*. Everything had to be done with good behavior—terribly dainty. Every phrase had to end with a little lift."

Going to Japan was "out of the question." "I visited Kyoto, and I remember thinking in one of the famous gardens that it was all very beautiful as long as you didn't look up. You have to have a very blinkered vision in Japan, to look only within very prescribed limits. Going to America, which was a totally unknown quantity, was also out. That left London or Paris, and I chose London because I found it far more interesting. For the next five years I learned entirely on my own, which is the only real way. Things that are *given* to you are worth nothing." She learned much from the recordings of great conductors of the past: from George Szell, "his fantastic clarity of detail"; from Wilhelm Furtwängler, "the depth and width of his view—he sees to the end of the world"; from Fritz Busch, "his courage to be free—with taste. That is the most important thing. Without that courage of your own convictions, there is no performance."

She "scraped by" on the occasional concert in Britain and Japan, where she was something of a celebrity because of her competition victories, but there were no tours. Her breakthrough as a Mozart specialist came almost "by chance." "One day I thought of doing a series of recitals of one composer, and the choice was either the Schubert or the Mozart sonatas. At the time, my Schubert was better, but I had ten of the eighteen Mozart sonatas in my pocket, and the rest didn't seem too much to learn. The real incentive was that people had always said they were weak. It simply wasn't true! They are incredible pieces. They reveal his whole development, much more than the concertos.

"He had the quickest mind in music; he didn't chew things over and over like Beethoven. His music is full of unexpected corners, directions you couldn't have imagined him going in. You mustn't give them away to the listener—you must play as though *you're* surprised. You must not present Mozart on a plate. You must keep the insecurity factor."

"Does your being a woman give you a greater affinity for him?" I asked.

She frowned. "I don't believe any of that. But it's true that there have been many good female interpreters of Mozart—whereas Beethoven's sound is absolutely masculine, Mozart's is both masculine and feminine. He hears the music very often in terms of the human voice, especially the female. There are places in the Mannheim sonatas [K. 309 and K. 311] where I'm pretty sure he is imagining a flirtation between a man and a woman. That kind of imagination is totally lacking in Beethoven. Think of his Leonore, in *Fidelio*—it's the idea of pure virtue, not a woman, singing. Mozart is more human—and he must have adored women!"

"Is there a definitive Mozart pianist?"

Her answer comes immediately: "No!" Then, one beat later, "It would have to be Mozart himself. How I wish I could have heard him!"

And how, I imagine, Mozart would have liked hearing her. We met again a few weeks later in Amsterdam, where she was playing and conducting two of the concertos with the English Chamber Orchestra at the Concertgebouw. Uchida is extremely particular about pianos, and the day before the concert she went to the Cristofori showroom, where a Bösendorfer was awaiting her inspection.

In a dusty back room she attacked the instrument with chromatic runs, listening intently to each note, testing the key action with the pedal first up, then down. Her face darkened as she jotted down notes on an envelope. She sailed into the opening piano bars of the K. 415 concerto, simultaneously singing the orchestral melody. More frowns. A piano technician arrived. "No good," she said. "The dampers are uneven, *ja?*" She demonstrated why. The technician shrugged and said, "It was good last night." "And the middle G is wobbly, *ja?*" A demonstration. Shrug: "It was good last night." "And the pedal action is too deep

"How I loathed it!" she says. "It almost made me quit music."

Uchida, who has also led this concerto from the keyboard herself, enjoys an "uncanny rapport" with Tate.

[illegible] demonstration. Shrug: "It was good last night." She stepped back, arms folded, eyes a matador's. *Andante*, she said, "It is not good for *Mozart*!" Slowly, the technician removed his jacket and went to the keyboard.

The next morning, I watched her rehearse the ECO in the Concertgebouw, the now completely submissive piano technican standing by for further adjustments. Uchida conducts with the piano facing directly into the orchestra, lid removed. Eyes, said Richard Strauss, are the maestro's most important tool of communication, and her riveting eye control reminded me of great Kabuki theater.

Several hours later, the vast old hall was packed, the orchestra in place. Then, in the hush, a door opened way at the top, behind the last row of the steeply rising stage seats, and she appeared, a flash in silver lamé top and black balloon pants, flying down the stairs. After bowing briefly, she turned and beckoned the musicians to begin, as if saying, "Come on, let's make music together." At some point in the radiant afternoon it came to me that one verb described her Mozart best: it floats. For all its remarkable intimacy, the almost palpable immediacy of its emotions, it always hovered just out of reach, nature distilled inside a brilliant crystal globe.

Uchida's Mozart has struck some critics as too brilliant, lacking that impression of artlessness which would allow it to emerge in all its purity. Certainly, in a dry auditorium like the Tonhalle in Düsseldorf, where I heard her in a recital several weeks later, her two Mozart sonatas sounded too sharply etched, slightly overexposed. But about the rest of the program—six Debussy études and Chopin's Sonata in B Minor, op. 58—I had no reservations. Her Chopin summed up all her virtues (and raised the thought that she might become the supreme Chopinist of our time): an enormous range of sound and color, always refined, and—most essential for Chopin—a sense of urgent drama developing behind the beautiful surfaces, brought to the boil without ever boiling over.

Her range of color and sense of drama are prodigious.

At thirty-nine, Uchida has been a relatively slow bloomer on the international piano scene, but she is in no hurry. "I have a long view," she says. "I feel I am getting better each day, and I am doing exactly what I want to do, which is making the most of my one life. The idea of success doesn't really have a hold on me; it depends on too many other people to decide who you are." She limits her concerts to sixty a year and thinks fifty would be still better. "Onstage I learn so much, especially from my mistakes, but I am happier playing and learning at home." The composer she is looking forward to tackling next is Brahms, whose late work will push her into the one period of music with which she has so far felt no "emotional connection": 1850 to 1900.

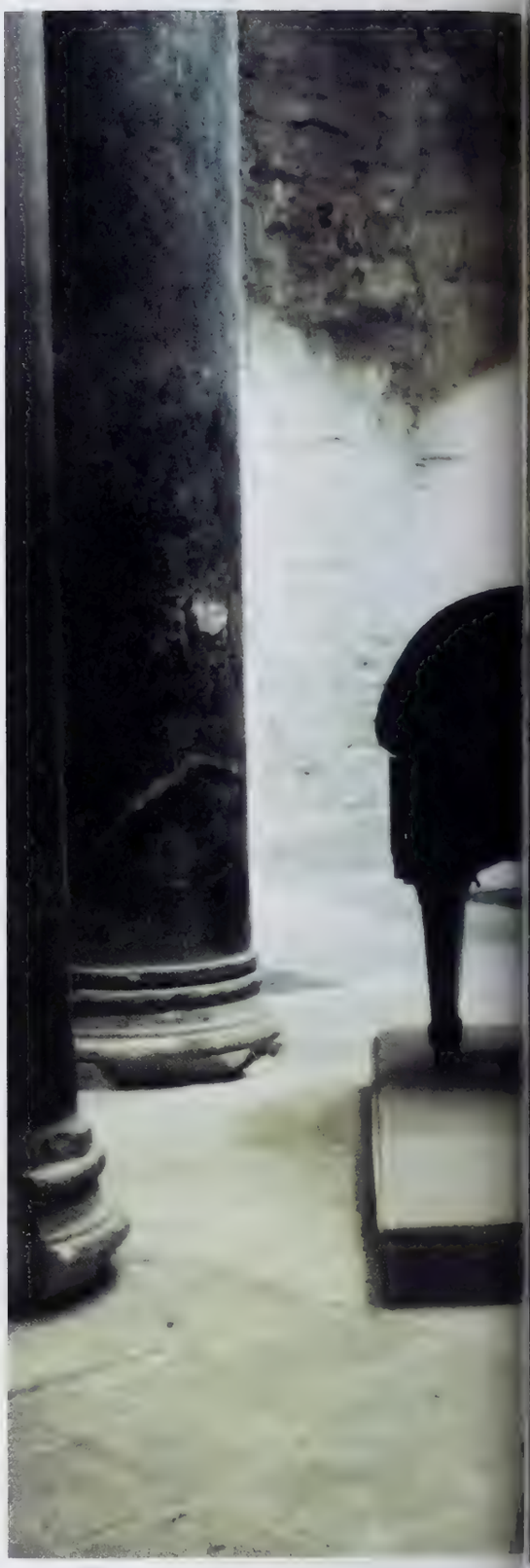
"Without an emotional relationship with the music it is pointless to produce any," she says. For her—and one hears it, one sees it, in her playing—that relationship is all. "Music doesn't lie," she says. "It is the truest friend. I spend all my time thinking about music. I wouldn't know what to do without it."

Charles Michener is a free-lance writer and editor living in London and New York.

Uchida on Disc and Onstage

Mitsuko Uchida's discography to date consists wholly of Mozart. Her performances of the complete piano sonatas (eighteen), originally released on seven discs or cassettes, are also available as a six-disc box. The pianist is now embarked on the complete piano concertos, with the English Chamber Orchestra, Jeffrey Tate conducting. Six are available now, among them the popular Concerto no. 26 in D Major (the *Coronation*, K. 537) and the D Minor, no. 20 (the "Elvira Madigan," K. 466). Uchida also makes a cameo appearance playing the [illegible] for Kiri Te Kanawa in the concert aria "Ch'io mi scordi di te? . . . Non temer, amato bene" (K. [illegible]). There are some Mozart albums will be of the Chopin [illegible] for release next March. All her recordings are on the Philips label. All are available on compact disc and cassette, [illegible] are also issued on LP.

[illegible] Uchida will be touring to America for [illegible] recitals and concerts later with orchestra: Thirteen Sundays, New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art (January 18), further recitals are scheduled for Iowa City (January 20), Columbia (February 2), Kansas City, Missouri (February 4), Toronto (February 7), and Santa Cruz, California (March 9). [illegible] Sonata [illegible] Mozart K. [illegible] (January [illegible]) and [illegible].



In the cathedral before a performance at the festival in Aix-en-Provence, Mitsuko Uchida—a very severe judge of pianos—tests her instrument.

WORTH A DETOUR

The El Greco triptych, with the Adoration of the Shepherds, the Triumph of Christ Crowning a Christian Knight, and the Baptism of Christ.

There are no signs pointing, "This way to the El Greco," through the seemingly endless suite of vast, ill-lit halls constituting the Galleria Estense, a once grand eighteenth-century palazzo in Modena. Yet the museum's chief jewel is a small, portable wooden triptych attributed to El Greco. Rescued by chance fifty-one years ago from oblivion in a cabinet tucked away in an obscure corner of the museum—and, thanks to this circumstance, exceptionally well preserved—the gilt-framed piece is painted in luminous [illegible] tempera on a gesso base. The main [illegible] the Triumph of Christ, flanked by the Nativity and the Baptism of Christ. A view of Mount Sinai with the Monastery of Saint Catherine appears on the back between scenes of the Annunciation and Adam and Eve before the Lord.

Signed *Cheir Domenikou* ("By the hand of Doménikos") in Greek capital letters, it is believed to be one of the Cretan artist's earliest works, painted after his arrival in Venice around 1566. Doménikos Theotokópoulos, after winning some fame as an icon painter in the Byzantine tradition, in Candia, a distant outpost of the Venetian Republic, financed his removal to Italy by auctioning a painting. In Venice, he found himself at the bottom of the heap, perhaps scraping together his precarious living as a *madonnero*—a painter of simple devotional images—but by the end of 1567, El Greco had entered the workshop of Titian, who recommended him to King Philip II of Spain as "that most outstanding young disciple of mine."

Modena's *altarolo* documents the impact of Venetian mannerism upon a gifted provincial artist struggling to free himself of the constraints of Oriental ecclesiastical

By Patricia Corbett

El Greco's diminutive, youthful masterpiece in Modena, Italy

GALLERIA ESTENSE MODENA

The triptych seen from the rear: the Annunciation, Mount Sinai and the Monastery of St. Catherine, and Adam and Eve in the Presence of the Lord.

iconography and style. Borrowing compositions from contemporary European works, El Greco tackled novel problems of perspective and modeling enthusiastically, if not with uniform success. The architectural framework in the Annunciation, for instance, is unsteady, the oversize nest of angels atop the Nativity stable precariously balanced, and the three theological Virtues in the center front panel clumsily if vigorously defined.

The freshness and energy of execution are matched, stroke for stroke, by El Greco's vision. His spontaneity and wit illuminate minor descriptive details: Adam's arm protectively encircling Eve's shoulders as they stand before a severe God; the lunging pose of the shepherds at the crèche, one of them clutching a lamb upside down; the crowned and mitered personages amid the damned.

Yet the anachronistic Byzantine features—the ectoplasmic figures outlined with a squiggle of bright pigment, the lurid heavens shot through with incandescent bolts, the towering, sugar-loaf peaks like those the Metéora stand on, in Thessaly—charge the triptych with spiritual intensity, foreshadowing the dematerialized, hallucinatory qualities that mark the dramatic masterpieces of the artist's Spanish period. Although he far surpassed his anonymous, monastic masters, El Greco never disowned his Eastern heritage, frequently referring with pride, even during the final years in Toledo, to "*mis padres griegos.*" This early triptych, mentioned in few guidebooks, deserves the two-hour detour from Milan or Florence. □

Patricia Corbett is Connoisseur's *European editor.*

Hell on Wheels

Gerhard Berger has all it takes to be a Formula One champion

By Stewart McBride

"Red Hot" Berger, the press has called him, and "The Meteorite," but maybe his greatest asset is grace under phenomenal pressure. It is by no means the rule in his line of work. Other Formula One drivers sweat themselves to sleep at night and are visited by prerace vomiting and migraines. In the closing moments on the starting grid, while their mechanics madly top up fuel tanks and strip away the electric-blanket cocoons used to heat slick racing tires for better grip, they fidget with their rearview mirrors and receive final instructions from the team managers. But there is Berger, minutes before the race, slouched on the ground beside his Ferrari, clowning with a few British journalists in his passable, racetrack-Teuton English. His mind seems to have pitched permanent camp in an oasis of tranquillity.

As a Grand Prix driver, Gerhard Berger, twenty-nine, is the ultimate athlete, enduring ungodly physical stresses otherwise known only to fighter pilots and astronauts. If he were not strapped to his seat, the violent heave of the car's cornering forces on a fast curve would fling him into the grandstands. Even with his six-point harness, the tortuous turns, constant braking, and shifting on hairpins toss him about the cockpit so violently that he emerges from each race bruised and blistered. For extra protection, Berger slips a pair of red elbow pads under his red, fireproof racing suit. Before sliding into his snug cockpit the Austrian also tapes both palms, already heavily callused after years of fierce kickback from his tiny steering wheel.

At Rivazza Curve, hundreds of *tifosi*, the Italian Grand Prix gypsies, have been camping for days in pup tents and mildewed sleeping bags. Here, half an hour southeast of Bologna, in the outskirts of Imola, the Autodromo Dino Ferrari carves three miles of dips and curves around red-tiled farmhouses, vineyards, and thoroughbred stables. Plumes of smoke rise as the fans pour their coffee and [illegible] and mortadella sandwiches. Thousands of rentacrowd [illegible] are now headed this way.

The fans begin hammering and shoveling, digging in and staking out their territory with cat's cradles of red plastic tape. They are elbow to elbow, positioning themselves on stepladders, pressed against the chain-link fence to get a blurred glimpse of their new ultrahero flying by at nearly 200 mph in a Formula One Ferrari, the ultimate racing machine.

Formula One represents the major leagues, the absolute summit of international motor racing. The arduous, March-to-November Grand Prix season hurtles Gerhard Berger and some two dozen other drivers from eleven countries in their firecracker Formula Ones through winding courses on city streets and special tracks in fifteen countries, from Brazil to Hungary, from the United States to Japan. During the season, each of these fortnightly dramas is watched on television by nearly a hundred million people in over fifty countries.

The term "Formula One" refers to the world's most advanced class of racing cars. (Its specifications—weight, dimensions, engine size, and fuel allowance—are established by the Fédération Internationale du Sport Automobile, in Paris.) Berger's own lusty, ultralight Ferrari—similar in form to the cars raced at Indianapolis though far more sophisticated—weighs only 1,200 pounds, less than half the weight of a passenger car, but, through technological wizardry, musters a remarkable 620 horsepower, ten times the power of an ordinary engine.

Formula One knows no greater name than Ferrari. It is the only team to have raced in Formula One since the world championship was created, in 1950, and the only team to have won as many as ninety-four Grand Prix races and nine driver championships. More significantly, Ferrari's standards and integrity are so fierce that the firm still insists on designing and constructing its entire Formula One race car from the tires up, even casting and sculpting the crankcase and engine. "Ever hear a twelve-cylinder Ferrari engine at full song?" asks Stirling

Photographs by Alain Bizos

Man and machine—a perfect fit.
Berger before the warmup at Monza.

September 11, 1988: the Monza Grand Prix. Like drivers, photographers get no second chances. The cars roar by at speeds of over 200 miles per hour.

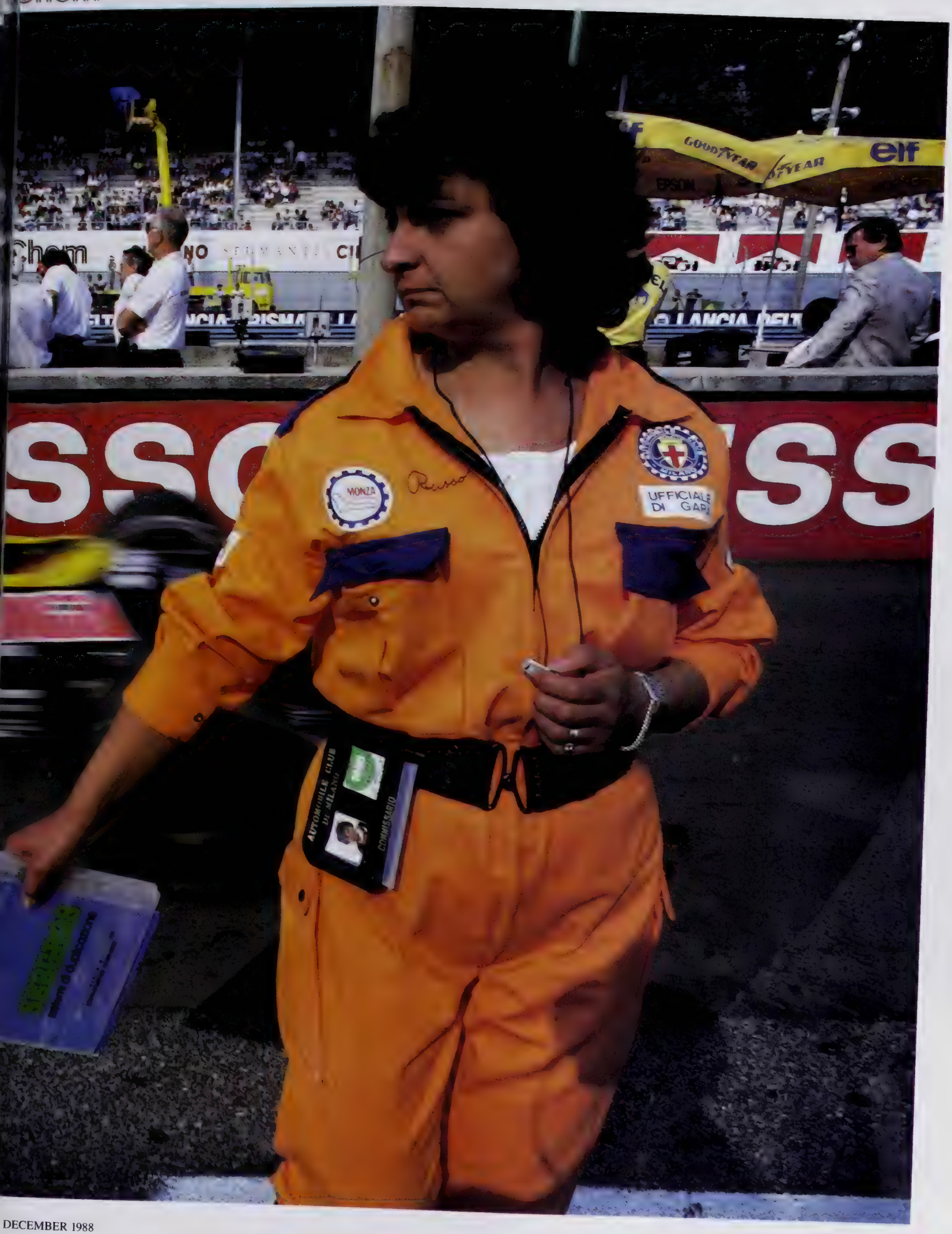
Moss, an ex–Formula One racer, with sixteen wins to his credit. "It's the sound of tearing calico. Pure music."

Traditionally, Ferrari has dominated the sport, but for much of the last decade the Italian Formula One racing team was languishing under heavy attack from British designers. Then, a year ago, Berger, Ferrari's handsome new Austrian driver, set a new track speed record and snatched the Japanese Grand Prix from the world champion, Nelson Piquet, of Brazil. The Italians thought that the wind had caught their sails again.

Two weeks later, Berger ruthlessly dominated the Australian Grand Prix, leading the pack from green light to checkered flag and setting another track record. Ferrari had gone without victory for twenty-seven months, and now, two wins in a row! *Mamma mia!* Berger, the conquering centaur, has been honored in Italy like a mythical hero, an Austrian second coming—with reason. A decade earlier, another Austrian driver, Niki Lauda (who had miraculously survived a fiery crash at Nürburgring), became only the second Ferrari driver ever to win two world championships. Now Berger seemed destined to fill Lauda's flameproof boots.

Berger is the latest in a sixty-year lineage of Ferrari *piloti* (not to be confused with *conduttori,* which is the Italian word for us mere mortals on the road) that dates back to Enzo Ferrari himself. Shortly before his death, last August, the ninety-year-old patriarch proclaimed Berger the most promising driver of his generation. "I admire his will to conquer," said the godfather of thoroughbred motorcars. "It reminds me of my own racing days." Ferrari began racing in the twenties as an Alfa Romeo driver of fair attainments and then became a coach, who assembled the Scuderia Ferrari, or "Ferrari Stable," as the company calls its crack driving team. Soon after World War II he completed the picture by developing and producing racing cars worthy of the team.

On 200-mph straights, Berger goads his machine to the threshold of disintegration. Taking corners at 170 mph, he edges toward the lethal limit where those four puny patches of rubber release their grip on the road and the car goes airborne. Today Berger seems to be an amalgam of Ferrari's greatest drivers, and then some. He combines the composure and wisdom of Lauda, the "computer" and ultimate strategist, with the daring explosiveness of the late French Canadian Gilles Villeneuve. For good measure, Berger also has a touch of the artistry and off-track flair of the late Jochen Rindt, Formula One's only posthumous champion, who died during practice at Monza in 1970 but not before amassing enough points to win the championship. Since 1956, eve-


GOODYEAR
elf
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MONZA
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DI GARA
AUTOMOBILE CLUB
DI MILANO
COMMISSARIO

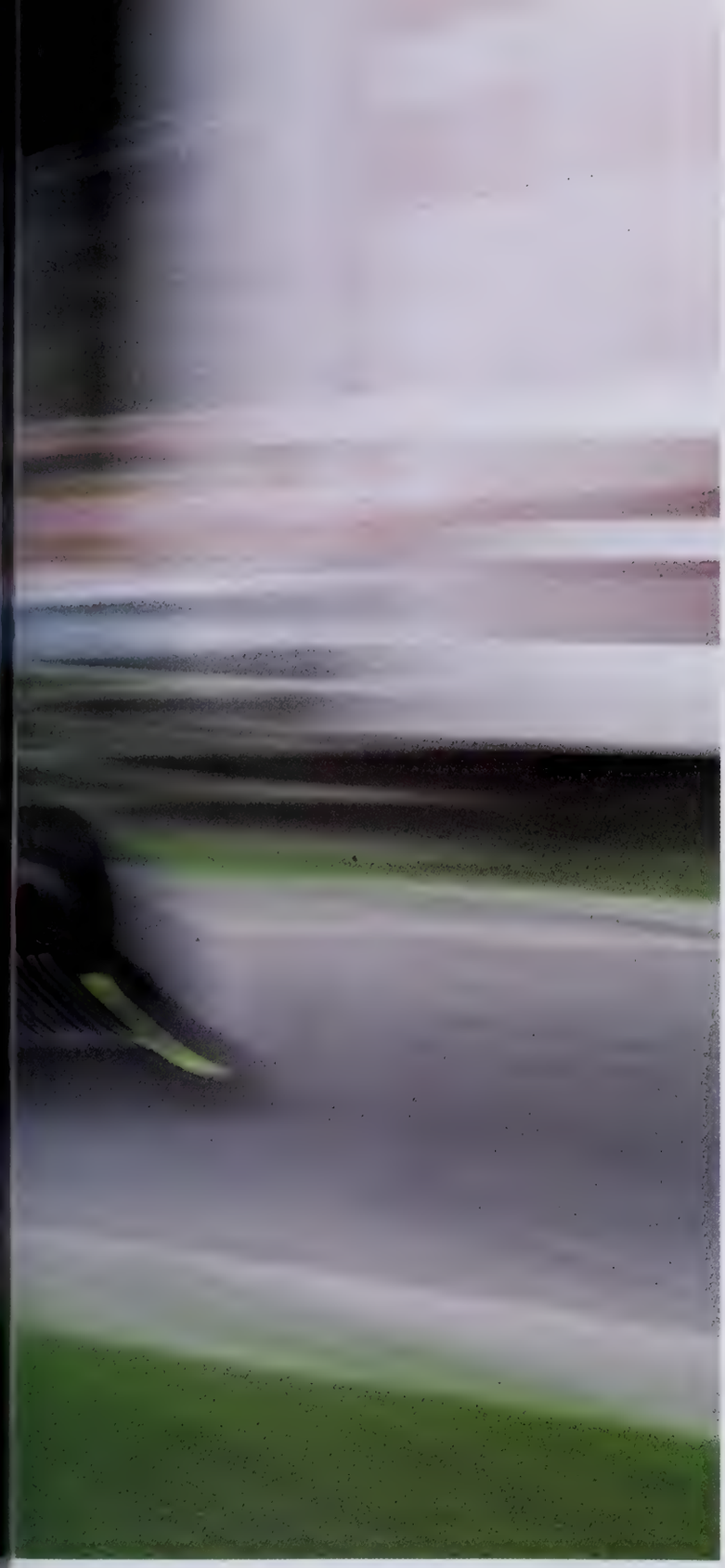
The Formula One equation: half the weight of a passenger car, ten times the horsepower.

[illegible] drivers have won the world championship; eight others [illegible] killed trying. Ghastly statistics.

[illegible] the world's highest-paid athletes, Berger and the other Formula One drivers race against one another in [illegible]. They are on the road as much as 300 days a year, logging [illegible] more than 150,000 miles of travel a year (in Berger's case, often on a private jet). They have strong backs, forearms like pistons, and eyes sharp enough to read *Der Spiegel* across a crowded room. [illegible] the borderline [illegible] choice, they fantasize [illegible] and regrets [illegible] of aggression that make professional football players look like flower children. Other sports may be about winning and losing. Formula One comes down to living and dying.

"From start to finish you're tense and poised like a cat ready to strike," says Stirling Moss. "You've got to split your concentration between the road, the tires, the engine, the guy in the rear-view mirror—and somehow keep it all in balance. All the while you've got the throttle to the floor and are throwing the car through every possible contortion."

Piloting a flame-belching Formula One car is trickier than a



JOHN BLAKEMORE

rainy-night jet landing on an aircraft carrier. An ill-timed flick of the wrist can catapult car and driver to smithereens. "There's tension all over the track," says the Italian Riccardo Patrese, who has run more Grand Prix races than any other active driver. "You make the slightest steering mistake, and you're out of the race. If a front tire touches a rail or curb the result is disastrous: broken steering or suspension, or worse."

Much worse. Mistakes are frequently fatal. "A marathon runner wouldn't last four laps in a Grand Prix," says the thirty-four-year-old English ace Nigel Mansell, who will join Berger as his Ferrari racing partner next year. "His legs wouldn't hold out." On his way to becoming Britain's top driver, Mansell has survived a broken back and a broken neck, as well as second- and third-degree burns to his lower body.

Most drivers who fit into the streamlined Formula One are built like jockeys, sinewy and compact. Berger, however, is tall and lithe (six feet even). With sun-bleached hair and boyishly dashing good looks, in his white high-top tennis shoes, sweat pants, and T-shirt, and with his jaunty strut, he would look right at home on center court with Becker and Cash. That Berger has luck beyond the wildest needs of a tennis ace (but just about enough for a man in his line of work) is suggested by a long, faint scar on his neck, a grim souvenir of a near-fatal car crash three years ago in the Austrian Alps.

He was born in the Tirol near Kitzbühel. His father ran a small trucking company in the village of Wörgl, where, after school, Gerhard used to hang around local rally drivers as they repaired their cars and recounted international tales of speed and mortal risk. While most Formula One drivers were raised on kart racing in their early teens, Berger did not actually get his hands on a steering wheel until he was eighteen. His parents objected vehemently to racing and refused to finance his participation in the dangerous game. But Berger, obstinate and resourceful, used his own savings to buy a Kawasaki motorcycle, which he drove on weekends. When he was twenty, his father tried to lure him away from the track by giving him his own trucking business, Europatrans, stipulating that Gerhard could spend none of the profits on racing.

Despite all that, young Berger eventually scraped up enough money to buy a second-hand race car and an old Oldsmobile diesel tow truck, on whose roof he carried spare parts. "I was always spending my hotel money on new tires, so I ended up the night before each race sleeping in the truck with my mechanic," he remembers. Still, the father's scheme nearly worked. In 1983, knowing that no driver can go far on the European racing circuit without sponsorship, and tired of penny-pinching, Gerhard was nearly ready to quit the track. Just then he encountered Helmut Marko, a fellow Austrian and former Grand Prix driver and now a racing talent scout. Through Marko, he met BMW's racing staff and was given a test drive—the Formula One equivalent of a job interview—which he passed with flying colors. In 1984, as a BMW team driver, he ran his first four Grand Prix races.

The following winter, however, Berger's career and life were nearly ended. On the two-mile road that winds down from Berger's village to his office, a drunk driver broadsided Berger's BMW 323i and sent him somersaulting over a cliff. Berger was thrown through the rear window, broke his neck in two places, and lay in a river, conscious but immobilized. By the kind of amazing chance that even Ian Fleming might have rejected as far-fetched, a car carrying two German surgeons, specialists in polytraumatology, was the first on the scene. They rescued Berger and rushed him to an Innsbruck hospital, where he was immediately operated on and narrowly saved from spending the rest of his life in a wheelchair. Faced with two possible courses of treatment, he typically opted for the more tentative, riskier type of surgery that promised (but only if it was successful) a faster return to full activity. Even so, he was advised that his recovery would take no less than nine months. A few weeks after the surgery and still in pain, Berger checked out of the hospital against doctors' orders, caught a plane to England, and signed a contract with the modest Arrows team to race Formula One the following year.

In 1985, Berger cut his teeth with Arrows and then moved to Benetton, where, the following year, he won his first Grand Prix, racing brilliantly on a single set of tires on a hot, abrasive Mexico

The *tifosi*—Grand Prix gypsies—await their heroes in a hush of expectation. Millions of television viewers worldwide are watching, too, just as devoutly.

track where all other drivers stopped for fresh rubber. Berger took the chance of a blowout at 200-plus mph, thereby gaining a few precious seconds.

A star was born. In 1986 he was besieged with offers from no fewer than five teams. Ferrari was in a slump, yes, but what other car in the world had that mystique? "It was a choice of the heart," says Berger, "something I had dreamed about since I was ten." As the world knows, he signed with Ferrari.

With his Scuderia contract came a "company car," a red Ferrari 328, and some unexpected fringe benefits, among them improved employee relations back at Europatrans. "My workers love Formula One," he says, "but for years the Ferrari fans always fought with my supporters. Now they are all in the same group." Between races Berger puts in twelve-hour days in his business, which by this time has grown to eighty employees, thirty-six trucks, and a service station. In the off-season, Berger, whom friends describe as a "lunatic Tirolean *Schussboomer*," often [illegible] the fine print in his contract and takes to the slopes or [illegible] an occasional guest hipcheck with the Red Bulls, Salzburg's ice hockey team.

[illegible] and confident, Berger was favored earlier this [illegible] the championship; but despite his exciting vic- [illegible] the Italian Grand Prix in September, he [illegible] place behind the McLaren driv- [illegible] Ayrton Senna, from Brazil. [illegible] McLaren team [illegible] MP4/4 chassis and [illegible] turbo Honda V-6 engine. It has been a cat among pigeons, remorselessly devastating the competition.

So, was Berger, with his sensational wins in Mexico, Japan, and Australia, just a flash in the pan? Hardly—but the coming season should settle the question. Brightening Berger's prospects is the circumstance that Ferrari's brilliant designer John Barnard, who recently left McLaren, has spent the last year sequestered in the Scuderia's top-secret workshop in Guildford, England, building Ferrari's 1989 chassis. And Berger should get an additional competitive shove from the arrival on the Ferrari team of the hard-charging Mansell, who months ago left the flagging Williams team as part of Formula One's end-of-season musical chairs, with teams and sponsors buying and selling Formula One drivers and engineers.

Moreover, as of next year, FISA has outlawed the turbocharger. Next season's opening race, in Rio de Janeiro, will mark the return to the less powerful, 3.5-liter, "normally aspirated" engines. The ban on turbos is hoped to put drivers on more equal footing and make the 1989 season one of the most hotly contested in years. The talented young Berger, who has yet to win a Formula One championship, will arrive in Rio hungrier than ever.

True, cars still make a difference. But when the odds are evened, a driver's skill and finesse figure more heavily than the brute force of the machine. And in that contest, Gerhard ("Red Hot") Berger is the one to beat. □

Stewart McBride, an American journalist based in Paris, is at work on a book about Formula One racing.

The 1989 Jaguar XJ6—its elegance is refreshing. Unmistakably Jaguar, the XJ6 reflects the classic character of its forebears, while achieving a higher degree of aerodynamic efficiency and high-speed stability.

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George Fowler—Photographer

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How did the Czar's personal commemorative pieces survive through the turmoil and upheavals of the Bolsheviks? Personal family letters indicate that the Czar's daughter Tatiana sent many family keepsakes to a trusted servant and friend, Anna Viroubova, who was preparing to leave the country.

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The beauty and rarity of these commemorative pieces are immediately apparent to the beholder. They remind one of the vast and seemingly unending glory of Imperial Russia, and of the unrelenting demise of the royal tradition and the last autocrat of Russia. The history surrounding the set is fascinating and mysterious; the set itself is truly an enhancement to any collection.

Interested parties may contact Igor, P.O. Box 66311, Houston, TX 77006.

CONVERSATION PIECE

OF GRAND HOTELS, BAKING POWDER, AND THE WIFE CHECKED AT THE DESK

BY BRUCE DAVID COLEN

Reservation clerks at Le Bristol, in Paris, the Hotel du Cap d'Antibes, the Park Hotel Vitznau, on Lake Lucerne, and Baden-Baden's Brenner's Park have grown accustomed to a certain German gentleman industrialist who always insists on a suite, one he has never occupied before, and "preferably, not one of your best." Instead of exchanging winks, the front-desk staffs at these four premier hotels make sure that he gets what he wants, and as expeditiously as possible—as well they might, for he is Rudolf August Oetker, the owner. That request for less-than-top accommodations is his empirical way of evaluating how the quarters might best be improved.

With the completion, this past spring, of a $20 million face-lift for the Brenner's Park, the quartet of luxury hotels has finally been done over to Oetker's satisfaction. The days of roughing it at his own establishments are over, at least until he purchases his next one. Perhaps a sense of relief has put Rudolf Oetker in a reminiscent mood. We were standing on the terrace of the Brenner's Park, watching a squad of ducks fight their way up the rain-swollen stream that cascades through the property's lush, arboreous grounds.

"I remember when all the family used to have afternoon coffee out here," he said with a gentle smile. "There was always a Black Forest cake and a big bowl of *Schlag*, and we'd bet on which of the ancestors of those ducks would get upstream first." One memory triggered many others.

"You could say my becoming an *hôtelier* was an accident of inheritance, because I was actually educated and trained to be a banker. My father died in World War I, and I was brought up by a stepfather who collected houses the way some men acquire mistresses. He had them scattered around Germany, from the Baltic and North seas to Bavaria. We moved around from one to another, but in the summers we [illegible] here. Of course, it wasn't long [illegible] her was talking to real-estate brokers. That's when my mother finally put her foot down. She was tired of having to find competent help. My grandmother, who was a very practical woman, took her daughter aside and made a suggestion. Mother thought it was a simply splendid bit of advice. She bought Brenner's Park. That was in 1941.

"The purchase agreement stipulated that the former owner, Alfred Brenner, a great, great hotel man, would stay on with his entire staff and run the place as they always had. Stepfather was assured that our usual accommodations would be refurbished and enlarged to the proportions of a private home and would be waiting for us whenever we chose to visit. Everybody was delighted with the so-called compromise. But, a few years later, my parents were killed in an Allied bombing raid. Brenner's Park was left to me. I had to decide whether to hold on to it or sell."

WOLF P. PRANGE

Rudolf Oetker's empire is valued at $2 billion. His four *hôtels de grande luxe* contribute a few percentage points to the bottom line.

Having grown accustomed to the absence of domestic obligations, the variety of soul-soothing cuisine, and the impeccable service at Brenner's Park—the grande dame of resort hotels, and one of Middle European society's few surviving retreats—he could think of no reason to forsake such carefree homes away from home. Unlike his stepfather, who enjoyed putting roots down everywhere, Oetker is rather a nomad, though he has houses, too. There are the family estate in Bielefeld, roughly halfway between Hanover and Dortmund, and a few others, about which Oetker seems almost apologetic: "Bielefeld is where we have the headquarters of my company, but it is off the beaten path and hard for people to reach. That's great for personal privacy, bad for business. So, we've another house on the Elbe, in Hamburg. My wife has a summer place on Long Island, which she and the children use. I don't."

Nothing personal. Rudolf Oetker just hates to fly. He despises the international airports, with their crowds, long lines, and delays at departure. "One is always rushing to wait," he says. "I get around Europe almost as quickly by car, and in a more civilized fashion." He might have added that the tinted windows of his Mercedes offer greater anonymity and safety, too. Rudolf

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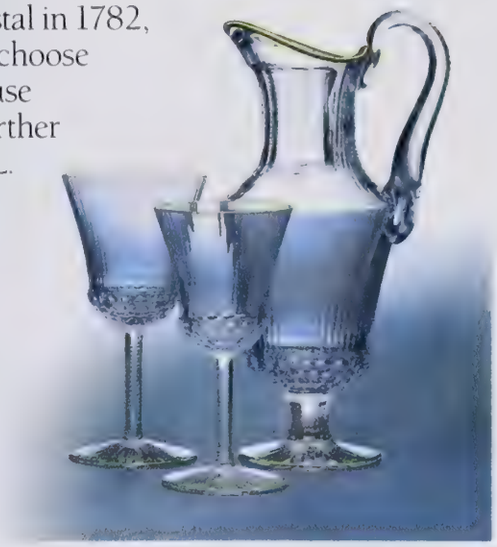

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Oetker has good reason to be cautious. In 1978 his son, Richard, then twenty-five, was abducted. After the payment of a record $8.8 million ransom, the young man was found by his wife. He was crammed in a wooden box smaller than a coffin, with his hands wired to an electrical line. His spine was severely damaged. Since then, the elder Oetker has granted no interviews until this, impromptu one.

Even to his compatriots, Rudolf Oetker, a tall, aristocratic gentleman, in his early seventies, remains a shadowy figure, but few Germans pass a day without tasting the fruits of the Oetker family tree. In 1891, Oetker's grandfather, a Westphalian pharmacist and food chemist, came up with the seemingly trivial idea of selling baking powder in small packets for domestic use. Quicker and easier to use than yeast, it had been available only to commercial bakers, in bulk. As a sales incentive, Dr. Oetker enclosed a few cake and bread recipes in each box. These little packages were the starter of a fortune now conservatively estimated at $2 billion.

THE BEST KIND OF SERVICE: AMENITIES YOU DO NOT HAVE TO ASK FOR.

Under the "Dr. Oetker" label, the grandson supplies the European housewife with every imaginable bread and dessert mix. In case she is in doubt about how and when to use them all, she may obtain from an Oetker subsidiary a book entitled *Baking Is Fun (Backen Macht Freude)*. When asked if the books were given away as a premium with purchases, Oetker smiled and replied, "No. People never appreciate something they do not have to pay for." In fact, no other book sells more copies in Germany except the Bible. "Cooks are very messy readers. A lot of those sales are for replacement copies."

Nonetheless, Oetker is not the sort to put all his loaves in one basket. A peek into the bar refrigerator in every Brenner's Park suite reveals the products of some of his other gustatory gambols: Dr. Oetker's assorted nuts and cocktail snacks; Fürst von Metternich and Henkell champagnes, along with several Rhineland still wines; a panel of beer companies; Auguste-Victoria bottled spring water, so named in honor of his mother . . . and on down the refrigerator shelves.

The family-owned multicompany—the [illegible] enough for his eight children by three [illegible] and three of his sons are active [illegible] also embraces banks and insurance companies, ranches in South America, tanneries, lumber mills, agro-chemical plants, real estate, and a giant sea-land shipping fleet. While the revenue from his four hotels accounts for only a couple of percentage points of the conglomerate's annual profits, Oetker would not waste time on any investment that does not pay. Asked what first attracted him to each of the post–Brenner's Park hotels, he proved that he was looking for winners, not baubles.

"Hotel du Cap? Location. A fabulous view and beautiful secluded grounds on the most desirable stretch of the Riviera. Le Bristol? Location again, but this time in the pleasure capital of the world, Paris; and the address, on Rue Faubourg St.-Honoré, just a block from the Élysée Palace, means we're surrounded by France's best fashion boutiques. As for the Park Vitznau, do you realize that there is not another first-class hotel with private access to Lake Lucerne?"

The hamlet of Vitznau is located near the geographical center of the Swiss Alps, at the foot of mile-high Mount Rigi and across the lake from the Titlis glacier. Knowing that the pleasures of the great outdoors increase in direct proportion to the comforts at day's end, Rudolf Oetker has seen to it that guests of the Park Hotel Vitznau are indulged right out of their hiking boots. To counteract the chill of an alpine evening, there are crackling fires, saunas, and an indoor-outdoor heated pool. About half the guests are vacationing Swiss. Even they find the setting something special.

Rudolf Oetker's sense of what makes the right location is very precise. When New York's old Gotham Hotel, on the southwest corner of Fifth Avenue and Fifty-fifth Street, was for sale several years ago, he considered it seriously but backed off. As he explains now, "The hotel was rundown, with ancient plumbing, wiring, everything, and would have had to be gutted, but that was all right. I was willing to go through the same, expensive restructuring doing the Bristol. But, for me, the Gotham was on the wrong side of Fifth Avenue. That may sound silly, but for European travelers and your countrymen, too, I feel, an address east of Fifth has more style and mystique—which means room rates can be higher. And we need that bonus to provide suites and services up to our standards." Oetker is still looking for that commanding site. Most recently he has been scouting the south of France.

Once a hotel is officially Oetker's, he brings in his architect of some thirty years, Professor Cesar Pinnau. When not designing Oetker's offices, factories, ship interiors, and hotels, Pinnau has been known to take on smaller assignments, such as the living quarters and entertaining salons of private yachts, including those of the late Onassis and Niarchos. The best example of his affinity for things nautical can be found on the roof of Le Bristol, where he decided to install an indoor swimming pool. The entire wall at the far end of the pool is covered with a trompe l'oeil mural depicting a family and friends, in Edwardian dress, enjoying an outing aboard a sailing yacht. In the distance one can see the landfall of Cap d'Antibes, where Oetker's Hotel du Cap stands today. The

COURTESY THE PARK HOTEL VITZNAU

Oetker's latest buy, the Park Hotel Vitznau, on Lake Lucerne, at the geographic center of Switzerland.

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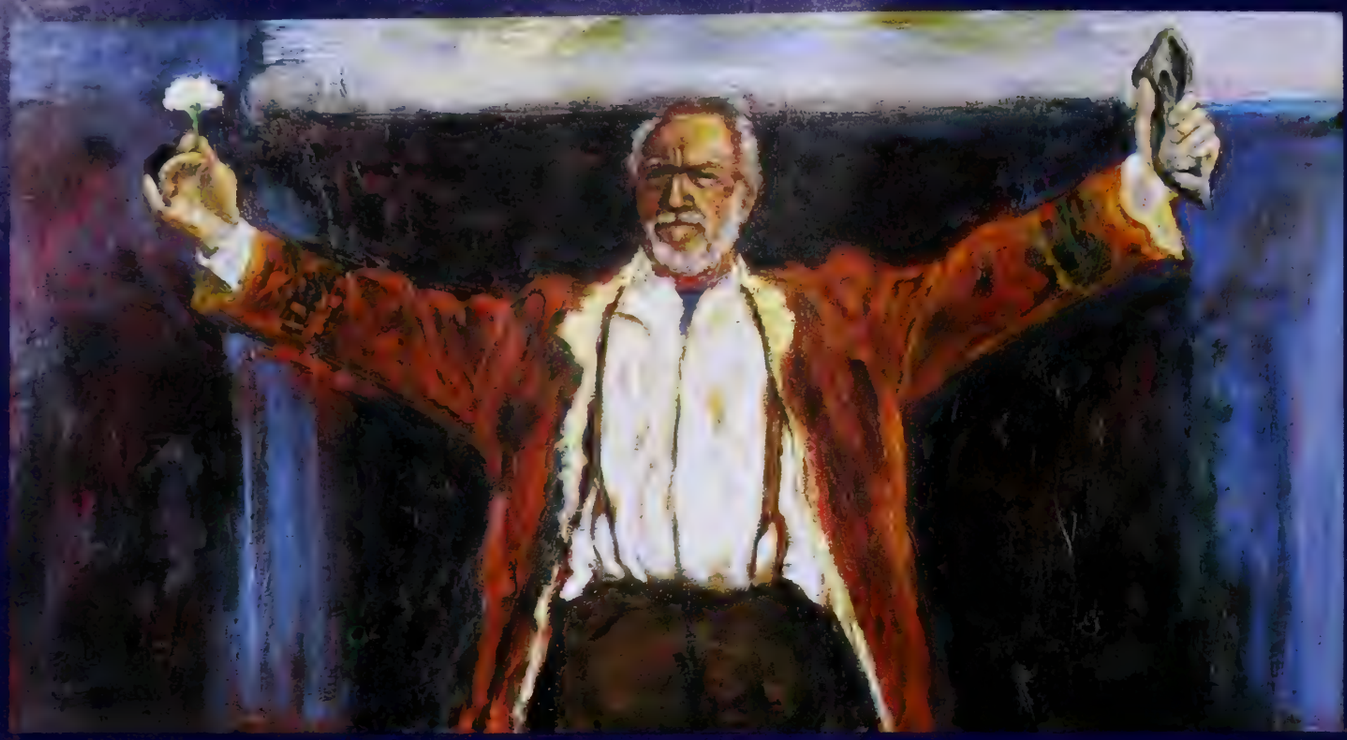

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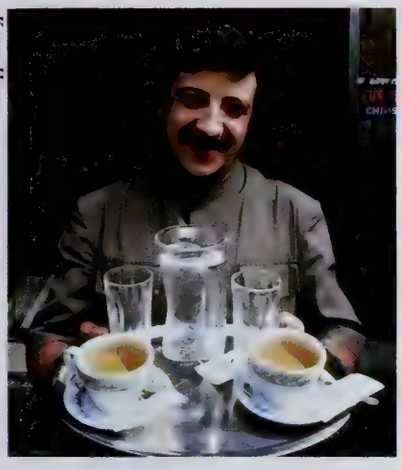

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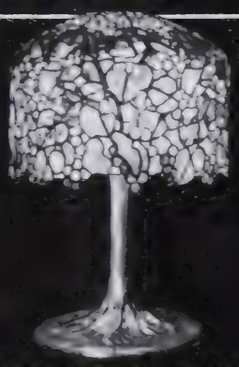

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COURTESY THE PARK HOTEL VITZNAU

One more perfect location: the dining room at the Park Hotel Vitznau.

pool area itself completes the tableau, with polished teak deck and bay windows slanted inward, as they would be aboard a ship. Asked which of his hotels he likes best, Oetker answered, with a comic sigh, "Perhaps the Hotel du Cap. It was the first of the four to be *finally* finished, and it turned out the way I imagined."

With rare exceptions—such as the rooftop fantasy or the sublime re-creation of a Grecian-style swimming pool, with heated marble benches, at Brenner's Park—Oetker and Pinnau's joint goal is to keep the distinct, period charm of each property, while making them 1990-functional. During the lengthy work and painting and afterward, Oetker goes on periodic tours of inspection, making all the final decisions as to fabrics, color schemes, and placement of furniture in each suite. At Brenner's Park, I watched as two assistant managers, in full livery, raised and lowered a nineteenth-century landscape of the Rhine Valley until it was at the beholder's eye level. "That's it!" Oetker said, and handed one of the staff his gold pencil to mark the wall. It is the same pencil he uses to check multimillion-dollar profit sheets. "You may have guessed that my wife has been known to ask why I am not as helpful around our own house," Oetker remarked. "And, of course, I can hardly refuse, when she wants to completely redo Bielefeld or the place in Hamburg."

One thing you are not apt to hear the Canadian-born Catherine Oetker ask for is more art. Her husband is an insatiable collector. His tastes are eclectic, ranging from fifteenth-century tapestries to eighteenth-century pastoral scenes and Dutch still lifes, from botanical prints and intricately inlaid French armoires to gilded mirrors, wall sconces, and chandeliers from the days of the Hapsburgs. "You would be surprised," he remarked, "how the hotels swallow up paintings, sculpture, and antique furnishings." Not really, considering that the four hotels contain roughly 500 rooms and suites, not to mention the endless hallways or the tens of thousands of square feet in lobbies, bars, restaurants, and lounges. Recently Oetker cheated himself out of some of that gallery space, when he acceded to the $20 million wishes of the all-seeing, all-caring diplomatic managing director of Brenner's Park, Richard Schmitz. A complete remodeling was called for, one that would transform small bedrooms into commodious suites. In the process, Oetker lost half a dozen bedrooms of picture-hanging space.

After much soul- and cash-register searching, it was decided to close the hotel during the remodeling, and that immediately brought a basketful of letters from guests who, for three and four generations, have made a ritual of spending the holiday season at Brenner's. Schmitz was made to feel like the Grinch Who Stole Christmas, but the unpopular measure allowed the workmen to complete the job in only four months. The hotel's huge kitchen was completely modernized, inconveniencing one more regular visitor: Rudolf Oetker.

About the only person who was not put out while Herr Oetker rebuilt his dream house was his daughter Countess Douglas, married to the director of Sotheby's in Germany, who was asked by her father to help with the interior decor of the new accommodations. The entire staff of Brenner's Park, though, was given a paid leave of absence.

The generous gesture underscores Oetker's convictions: "Beautiful gardens and grounds, lovely interiors, and wonderful cuisine are vital to a great hotel; but without gracious, attentive service, surroundings and food lose their appeal. If you do

The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!

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not have—and cannot keep—a first-rate staff, you are going to end up with a second-rate establishment."

Exactly how far Oetker's employees will go to grant guests their every wish is best illustrated by a story from Claude Lainé, the unflappable head concierge at Le Bristol: "A couple of years back, an American gentleman was staying with us. He was an executive with one of your big automobile companies. Well, one morning he came up to the desk and asked, 'Monsieur Lainé, would you please look after my wife while I'm gone today?' Naturally, I said, 'Of course,' and looked around the lobby for the woman. But I could see no likely ma-

IN GERMANY, ONLY THE BIBLE OUTSELLS OETKER'S *BAKING IS FUN.*

dame. I asked if she was up in their room. 'No, she's right here,' and he pointed to his attaché case. Again, I asked where, beginning to think he might be tipsy, even though it was not yet ten o'clock. The husband looked at me as if I were an idiot and repeated, 'She's right here.' With that, he reached into the case and took out a black lacquered box, saying, 'Here, now take good care of her. I'll pick her up when I return this evening.' And, for the next six weeks, every day he left his wife—I mean her ashes—in my care. It's true, I swear. I would not joke about a thing like that."

To Oetker, the best kind of service involves the little attentions and amenities that you do not have to ask for. At Brenner's Park, the luggage arrives in your room before you do, and a maid is there to help with the unpacking. Floral bouquets, terry robes, and bars of bath soap as big as the Ritz (which other hotels use to bolster first impressions) are changed every day. The bartender remembers that you like your dry martini made with Bombay, not Beefeater, gin, even if he has not seen you in two years. The dining-room captain will be sure to let you know when your favorite venison pâté is on the menu, and the waiter never has to be told twice to serve sauces on the side. The concierge, recalling a guest's passion for chamber music, will reserve tickets for a concert, prior to the guest's arrival. Otto von Bismarck once wrote, "When the world comes to an end, come to Baden-Baden. It will last a fortnight longer." He must have been staying at Brenner's. □

Bruce David Colen is a travel and food writer living in Malibu, California.

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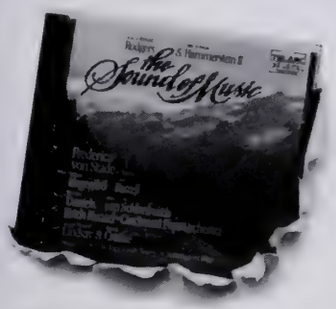

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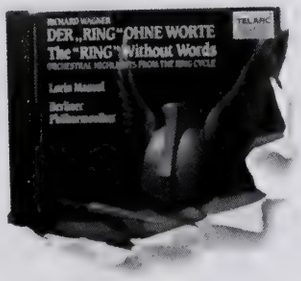

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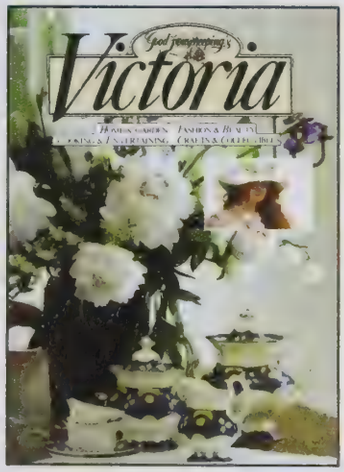

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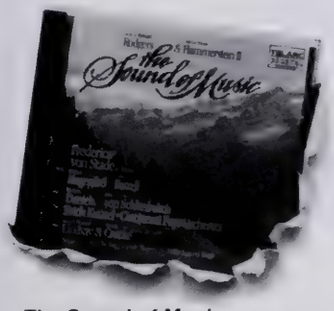

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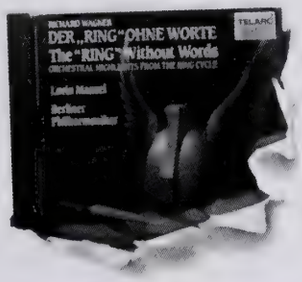

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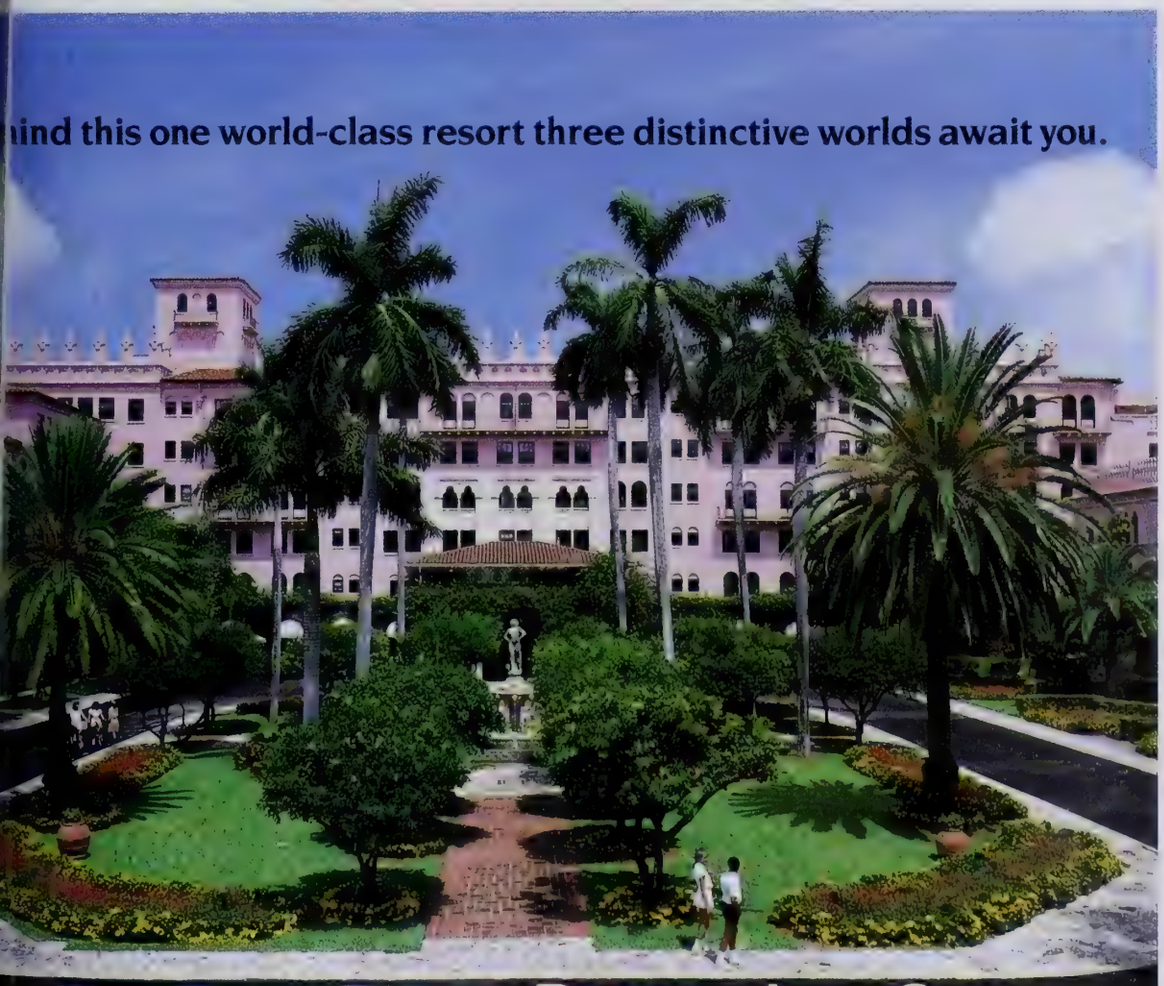

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RUSSIAN PAINTING: *GLASNOST* OPENS A NEW FIELD FOR INVESTORS

BY ROBIN DUTHY

COURTESY CHRISTIE'S, LONDON (2)

A developing market for Russian art both inside and outside the Soviet Union is presenting Western collectors with some fine opportunities. A periodic lifting of the iron curtain, so far as the arts are concerned, is not new. During the last quarter century or so, orchestras, soloists, ballet companies, and circuses have made sorties into the outside world. After their return the curtain has descended once more while the Soviet government takes stock of the effect in terms of goodwill, defections, and so on. During the 1970s a handful of exhibitions of contemporary Soviet art, of the kind described as unofficial, appeared in the West. Gradually the government's constraints on style and subject matter have eased, and the Soviet Union's artists are free to paint more or less as they choose.

Glasnost has proved itself to be much more than a change in the intellectual climate. A flurry of exhibitions, commercial and otherwise, comprising Russian painting before 1917 as well as Soviet work, have been mounted in the United States, Britain, and Switzerland. Inside the Soviet Union, the clear intention at the Ministry of Culture is to come to terms with Soviet art history, warts and all. This means, as the exhibition at the Hirshhorn Museum, in Washington, recently showed, that what is seen by many as the embarrassing, "happy tractor driver" interlude in Soviet art history is faced up to, even though the best of this Stalin-directed art depresses the spirits as much as it was intended to lift them.

The success of Sotheby's in transporting its well-oiled art-auction machine into virgin Russian territory in July—showing, moreover, that even in selling difficult, abstract works by living Soviet artists it worked to perfection—marked a step of real importance. Prices soared even beyond the secret hopes of Sotheby's and the dreams of several artists, who became, by Soviet standards, rich overnight.

Western collectors will now be wondering what other periods of Russian art to move in on. As in other countries, plenty of indifferent academic work was done in nineteenth-century Russia. When the authorities at the Petersburg Academy set "The Feast of the Gods in Valhalla" as the theme for the historical section of their Gold Medal competition of 1863, however, many students rebelled. The serfs had been emancipated two years earlier; the intellectual caldron was boiling fast; the novels of Turgenev, Dostoyevski, and Tolstoy and the music of Borodin and Rimsky-Korsakov were excitingly in tune with the times. To be asked to paint a subject of no conceivable relevance to the present was insulting. A group of fourteen students resigned. Chernyshevsky, the leading Russian thinker in the field of art, had proclaimed, "The true function of art is to explain life and comment on it." The Wanderers, as the ex-students were known because of the traveling exhibitions they put on, were bent on making their art useful to society. Within this general plan, the concept of the peasant's life as being one of innocence and austerity was to be given due weight. This idealization of the peasant became a familiar theme in European painting, and though in less able hands it can seem dated and sentimental, some Russian painters, such as Ilya Repin (the "Russian Courbet") and Isaak Levitan, managed to represent it with force and dignity. No major work by any of these artists has been sold at auction for years, though prices now would be well up in six figures, especially since the Soviet Union has made known its interest in repatriating important Russian art.

The Wanderers overlap a little with the French Barbizon painters in their feeling for the peasant's life and environment.

Above: Goncharova's *The Ice Cutters*. Sold in 1984 for $79,000. Right: Rodchenko's *Composition* (1918). Sold for $260,000.

December Highlights

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The key to understanding their place in Russian art is to recognize that, as Camilla Gray put it in *The Russian Experiment in Art: 1863–1922*, their mission "to arouse compassion and sympathy for the common man was an unprecedented subject for art in Russia, not only by virtue of its 'social' impulse, but by its emphasis on the traditional Russian way of life, for since Peter the Great's europeanization of the country, everything Russian had been dismissed as barbarous and boorish and 'culture' had come to mean something essentially foreign."

In light of the castigation of the bourgeoisie after 1917, it is ironic that Russian art should owe its greatest debt to the patronage of four great bourgeois patrons and collectors. The rail tycoon Savva Mamontov kept a large colony, including several of the Wanderers, at work on his estate. Another, Pavel Mikhailovich Tretyakov, collected paintings by all the outstanding realist painters of his day. They are to be found in his collection, still known as the Tretyakov Gallery, given to the city of Moscow in 1892. Later, the great collectors Ivan Morosov and Sergei Shchukin welcomed Russian painters to visit their collections to drink in the achievements of van Gogh, Cézanne, Matisse, and other great European artists of the time.

Buyers should concentrate on the Wanderers' early work, for the movement had dissipated by the early 1890s, and Ilya Repin, the most revolutionary of the group in the 1860s and 1870s, lost his powers when he lost the use of his right hand.

Also working in the 1880s was a small group of Impressionist-influenced Russian painters, the best of whom is Konstantin Alekseevich Korovin. Fifteen of his works have sold at auction in the last two years, mostly for between $1,000 and $4,000—a price range that must start moving up before long. Many major innovative artists of the period, such as Viktor Borissov-Mussatov, Pavel Kusnetsov, and Mikhail Vrubel, have yet to feature in Western auctions and are little-known outside the Soviet Union. Vrubel (1856–1910), in particular, was a genius who has been compared to Cézanne. His work forms a link between the realism of the 1870s and the radical movements of the early twentieth century. His watercolor and pencil drawings of flowers are exciting explorations of form that sometimes hint at the cubism that was to follow after his death.

The next art movement of consequence and the first to make an impact abroad was the World of Art movement, of Alexander Benois and Sergey Diaghilev. The costume designs for Diaghilev's stunning Paris productions of the Ballets Russes are often sold at auction in the West, yet prices have risen by only 130 percent since 1975. This was another market Sotheby's pioneered in the late 1960s. It rose fast for five years but then ran out of steam. Even in the hectic market conditions of 1985–87, the climb was a paltry 20 percent. Ballet buffs are still buyers, to be sure, but the trouble is that they all want a highly finished watercolor by Léon Bakst and would pay up to $50,000 for one showing an erotic, exotic, Oriental costume. They are not so keen on his sketchy, less colorful work. Designs by Benois have doubled to about $1,300 since 1975, though few have passed through the market. The best performances come from Natalya Goncharova (up 180 percent to $2,800), whom Diaghilev commissioned to design decors for *Le Coq d'Or* and *Firebird*, and her husband, Mikhail Larionov (up 190 percent to $5,800). Apart from the couple's ballet designs, they were important innovators in fusing Russian folk art with French Post-impressionist and fauvist painting, as well as Italian Futurism. They caught in their net all the lively creative ideas that were circulating in Europe and Russia in the years leading up to 1914.

It was Alexander Benois's magazine *World of Art* that introduced Russian artists to the dramatic developments in European culture around the turn of the century. From these ideas emerged two great movements in Russian art that were to make a lasting impact in the outside world—Suprematism and Constructivism. The "Donkey's Tail" exhibition, in Moscow in 1912—the last in a sequence of key developments—repudiated European artistic traditions. Larionov, Goncharova, Kasimir Malevich, and Vladmir Tatlin were represented in force; Chagall,

Ilya Repin avoids the trap of sentimentality in this portrait of his daughter, *An Autumn Bouquet* (1892).

STATE TRETYAKOV GALLERY, MOSCOW

E. M. Cheptsov's *A Meeting of a Village Cell* (1924)—shown at the Hirshhorn last summer.

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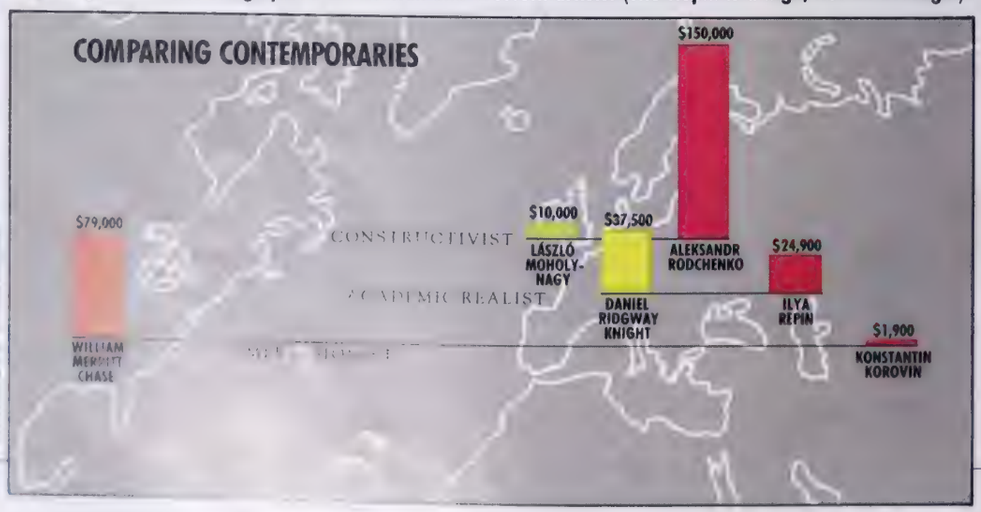
Repin's *Religious Procession in Kursk Gubernia* (ca. 1880–83). He treated the peasant with force and dignity.

then living in Paris, sent a painting called *Death*. With hindsight, most exhibitions of painting in Europe at this time could be judged by the degree of outrage they provoked. The Donkey's Tail aroused intense hostility, and, sure enough, it signified the arrival of important and exciting work. The next year, Larionov published what he called a Rayonist manifesto—a less explosive statement than Marinetti's Futurist manifesto of 1909 but one that proposed a style of painting that would be a "synthesis of Cubism, Futurism, and Orphism" and that by means of intensely worked lines and masses of color, "perceived out of time and in space, [would give] rise to a sensation of what one may call the fourth dimension." From then on Russian, Italian, and French ideas become densely interwoven.

The Moscow correspondent for London's *Daily Telegraph*, Xan Smiley, recently wrote of the Soviet Union's art millionaires—a few ordinary-enough citizens who, with a moderate flow of income and an impressive amount of sleuthing, have tracked down and bought valuable collections of early avant-garde Russian/Soviet art. Anything of importance to Soviet or Russian culture would certainly be denied an export license, which means that there are two markets: the internal Soviet market, in which prices are low, and the market in the outside world, where important works may soon reach into seven figures. Mikhail Vrubel, Mikhail Larionov, Vladimir Tatlin, Aleksandr Rodchenko, and their peers are among those who figure in these markets.

The key figure of the Suprematist movement is Malevich. Suprematism became critical in influencing later-twentieth-century painting. "In the year 1913," Malevich wrote, "in my desperate attempt to

Surprising contrasts: average prices for Russian and Western artists. (The Repin is a high, not an average.)



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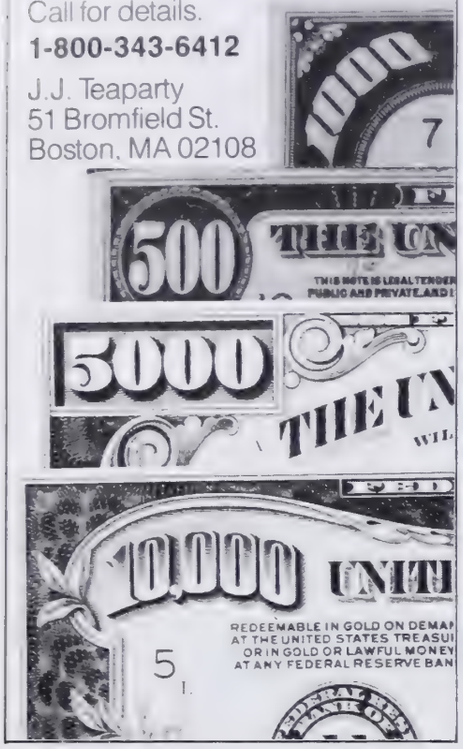

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free art from the burden of the object, I took refuge in the square form and exhibited a picture which consisted of nothing more than a black square on a white field." This was the first drawing in the style Malevich called Suprematism, defining it as "the supremacy of pure feeling in creative art." He went on, "To the suprematist, the visual phenomena of the objective world are, in themselves, meaningless; the significant thing is feeling, as such, quite apart from the environment in which it is called forth."

Every modern-art curator in the West would love to get his hands on a Malevich Suprematist work. This was his most creative period, and a major painting might well fetch $2 million to $3 million. Next in value come his early figurative works, and least valuable are the figurative works he was forced to return to in the 1920s.

COURTESY CHRISTIE'S LONDON

The "Wanderer" Isaak Ilich Levitan's *Hunters in Winter,* sold in 1986 for $3,500.

Constructivism, the second great Russian contribution to modern art, was founded by Vladimir Tatlin. He had seen experiments made by Picasso with cubist sculpture in 1912 and 1914, and he himself began to translate cubist ideas into three-dimensional abstract constructions. After his visits to Paris and Berlin, he made a series of reliefs from wood, metal, and cardboard. Tatlin, Rodchenko, Naum Gabo, and Antoine Pevsner proceeded to make sculpture of striking originality. These works would be rare and important acquisitions for any Western collector to make.

Much of Tatlin's and Rodchenko's work is missing, presumed destroyed; and reconstructions of it from photographs have been made for exhibition and educational purposes. The most spectacular of Rodchenko's surviving works is *Oval Hanging Construction Number 12* (ca. 1920), in the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

After October 1917, all four artists were allowed freedom to work as they wished, and all were for a few years sympathetic to the Revolution, hoping—as Gabo and Pevsner's Realistic manifesto of 1920 envisaged—that "in the unfolding epoch of human history" a new style of art would emerge, to be based on a rebirth of space and time as "the only forms on which life is built and hence art must be constructed."

During these years the avant-garde lived in a euphoric state. By 1920, however, Lenin, who had previously left direction of the arts to Lunacharsky, the cultivated commissar of education, took control, ordaining that art should be comprehensible to the people and "useful to industry." The manifesto may have been a final plea. If it was, it fell on deaf ears. Kandinsky, Gabo, Pevsner, and Lissitszky left Russia to develop their ideas elsewhere.

To buy Soviet art, dealers can, like Peter Schaffer of A La Vieille Russie, in New York, and Roy Miles in London, cultivate contacts and maneuver into a position where they will be invited to the Soviet Union to view a selection of Russian paintings. These could be anything from minor works by the Wanderers to highly competent figurative paintings by living artists working in the Cézanne tradition. But you will rarely get what you hoped for. Schaffer usually finds perhaps two paintings worth buying out of the twenty he is offered. "No great shakes" was his judgment of the last batch.

Or you can buy at auction. The Soviets seem to have been sending a continuous trickle of material for sale for at least ten years. In the 1960s and 1970s it was mostly silver, porcelain, Fabergé, and so on, because Russian nineteenth-century painting was not then in demand. Tastes have changed; the market is there, and, it has been said, the Soviet government, using agents, has quietly fed certain European salerooms with good, but not great, pre-Revolutionary painting.

This is one more phase in the long-running Russian/Soviet cultural-image-building program. In *Russian Art and American Money* (Harvard University Press, 1980), Robert C. Williams has charted developments from the Louisiana Purchase Expo-

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sition, of 1904, when 600 Russian paintings were sent over, to the Soviet campaign of the 1920s to sell Soviet art in America, and on to the even more massive program of Soviet-government art sales up to 1938. These activities, Williams is convinced, were "part of a broad effort to win political as well as economic credit in the West." Furthermore, he believes, th

SOLOMON R. GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, NEW YORK

Kasimir Malevich's *Morning in the Country after Rain* (1911). Suprematism tried to free art from object.

most famous sales, including Andrew Mellon's purchase of works by Raphael, Rembrandt, and Titian, were not unconnected with the Soviet government's campaign between 1928 and 1933 to win U.S. "diplomatic recognition and trade."

The marketing of Russian art today seems to have more to do with art as a universal language, a vehicle for the communication of serious thoughts and common experiences—part of a greater bridge-building scheme. Nobody doubts the useful role that art can play in this. Collectors and museums may soon get the chance to play theirs. □

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Zagat picks top fifteen U.S. hotels

Tim and Nina Zagat, who brought you the most trusted guides to dining out in America's cities with their best-selling *Restaurant Surveys*, have now taken on the hotel industry. Enlisting the voluntary help of 4,000 seasoned business travelers, including 500 travel professionals, the Zagats compiled the two-volume *United States Hotel Survey*. Each of the 800 properties is rated on the Zagats' 0-to-30 scale (none receives higher than a total of 27) for quality of rooms, dining facilities, service, and cost. The Zagats draw heavily from the pointed comments of their reviewers, so readers get a good feel for everything from a hotel's caliber and type of clientele to the firmness of the mattresses. The lively descriptions read like good recommendations from friends who happen to share your prejudices (and are just as reliable).

We asked Tim Zagat to select from the forthcoming book the top fifteen hotels in America's most traveled cities. His choices (listed below, complete with quotations from his reporters) rank high in old-world charm and concierge service; and since they are among the best hotels in the country, they are also among the most expensive (a double room costs from $145 to $250 a night). "These are the places that don't merely put a bouquet in your room but give you an entire garden blooming outside your window," says Zagat. "If I had to go out of town tomorrow, these are the hotels in which I'd want to stay."

1 MANSION ON TURTLE CREEK, DALLAS (27.00) Tied with New Orleans's Windsor Court as the best major U.S. hotel, this is where to go "when everything must be perfect"; "one of the world's great hotels," offering "consistent quality across the board" and "elegance from every perspective," plus a spectacular restaurant under the aegis of the star chef Dean Fearing ("most popular" in our *1989 Dallas Restaurant Survey*); though it is "terribly expensive," you will "feel like royalty"; "supercalifragilisticexpialidocious." (214) 559-2100; (800) 527-5432.

2 WINDSOR COURT HOTEL, NEW ORLEANS (27.00) "Everything a hotel should be"; this is "by far the best hotel in New Orleans," with "opulent rooms (all suites)," public areas "beautifully decorated in English antiques," and the Grill Room, generally considered among the Big Easy's best restaurants; "sheer class." Our surveyors rated this tied for "best in U.S.A." (504) 523-6000; (800) 262-2662.

3 HOTEL BEL-AIR, LOS ANGELES (26.64) Quite simply "L.A.'s best" and "one of the finest in the U.S.," serving the very rich and famous and anyone else lucky enough to get one of its few available rooms; this "serene and romantic" hideaway offers "understated luxury," "lovely comfortable rooms," "discreet service," and "elegant dining"; it has "gorgeous, parklike grounds." Nearly five hundred of our reviewers give the Bel-Air unanimous raves: "Shangri-La," "the way to live," "has it all," "you can't do better"; "even the swans are happy," but they don't pay the bill; do not miss the superb weekend brunch. (213) 472-1211.

4 REMINGTON ON POST OAK PARK, HOUSTON (26.52) Though some say it "slipped a notch under new still "exquisite in every detail" and "in a management," this "gorgeous hotel" is class by itself"; near the Galleria shopping center, but why leave "elegant suites," "terrific food," "great bar," and a staff that "calls people by name"? Special touches include lovely artwork, "multitudes of flowers," and afternoon tea; "one of America's truly great hotels; they treat you like royalty, and you pay royally for it." (713) 840-7600; (800) 231-9802.

5 RITZ-CARLTON, ATLANTA (26.15) A "lovely, soothing oasis" downtown, and neck and neck with its Buckhead Ritz sibling for "the best in Atlanta"; this "near perfect" hotel offers a "combination of southern hospitality, northern efficiency," and "drop-dead elegance"; afternoon tea and clubby antique furnishings feel English, and the staff "pampers you to death." The Restaurant is top-quality. Only drawback: no in-house health club or pool. (404) 659-0400; (800) 241-3333.

6 KAHALA HILTON, HONOLULU (25.81) Only fifteen minutes from Waikiki and Honolulu honky-tonk, this "perfect resort" feels "like Maui on Oahu," and the staff "remembers regulars"; "beautiful rooms," "tropical luxury and service to match," "a great private beach," "very lovely grounds," highly rated food, and dolphins that you can watch perform cause our reviewers to rate this "the best rest outside of heaven." (808) 734-2211; (800) 367-2525.

7 MANDARIN ORIENTAL, SAN FRANCISCO (25.43) A "sensational new hotel"(1987) that is "destined for greatness"; this sleek high-rise occupies the top eleven floors of the California Center, a forty-eight-story building. Our reviewers praise the "huge rooms," "exem-

(Continued on page 168)

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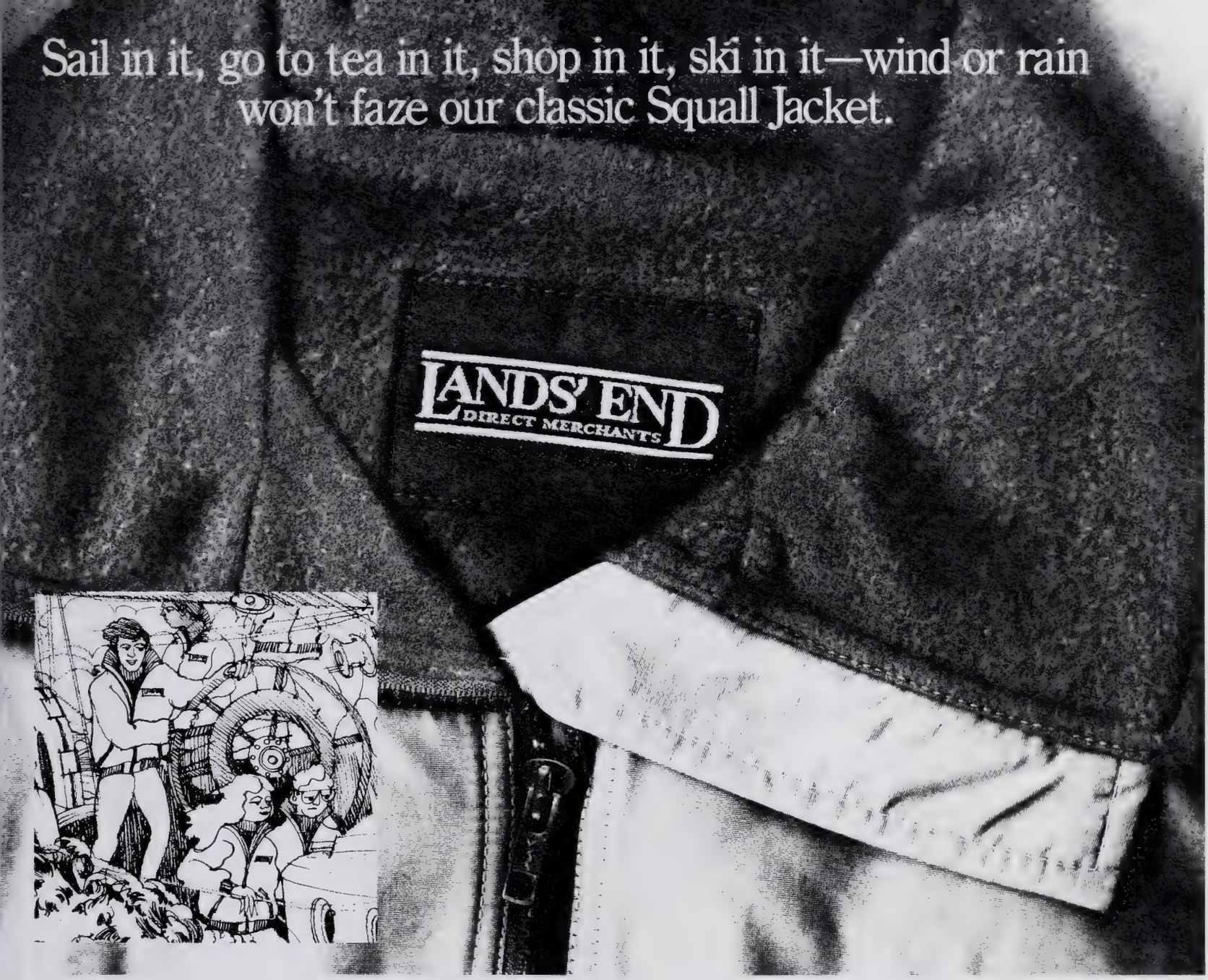

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(Continued from page 166)
plary service," "superb dining" (at Silks), "great views," and "marble bathrooms," which make you want to skip seeing the city and simply stay and soak. In sum: "absolutely the best" and "worth the price." (415) 885-0999; (800) 622-0404.

8 GRAND BAY HOTEL, MIAMI (25.22) For many, this small Coconut Grove charmer represents the ultimate in luxury; the undisputed "best in Miami" and "one of the best in the U.S."; not only is there fine dining at the Grand Cafe, but the staff checks prior records to see if you have any special requests, and "great" rooms make for "consistent superiority." The pool is a little small and the place is "not cheap," but the "mainly business crowd" does not mind. (305) 858-9600; (800) 327-2788.

9 FOUR SEASONS HOTEL, PHILADELPHIA (25.21) The only Philadelphia choice for the discerning, upscale traveler; "even W. C. Fields would like this place," which offers "absolutely the best in comfort, service, dining, and location" plus "wonderfully elegant rooms," "deluxe" public areas, health club, and indoor pool, all in the "prettiest part of Center City," a cultural and shopping hub. The hotel's eclectic, international restaurant, the Fountain, ranked second in both overall popularity and food quality in our *1989 Philadelphia Restaurant Survey*. (215) 963-1500; (800) 332-3442.

10 RITZ-CARLTON, CHICAGO (25.03) "Best Chicago hotel" by acclamation; generates across-the-board enthusiasm: "top of the line," "no detail is ever missed," "best of everything," "the executives' choice," "world-class", sits high above Water Tower Place mall. You can "shop till you drop" and enjoy "beautiful views from elegant rooms," sup "sumptuously" at the Dining Room, and then work it off at the health club or by swimming laps in the indoor pool. (312) 266-1000; (800) 621-6906.

11 FOUR SEASONS HOTEL, WASHINGTON (24.99) This deluxe Georgetown hotel, a celebrity hideaway, is generally considered to be "tops in D.C." It rates unanimous raves: "a model for great modern hotels," displaying "perfect taste"; "it has everything," including "beautiful rooms," "gracious service," "serene setting," and an elegant restaurant and a terrace lounge that are perfect for entertaining. Know that some rooms may be "smallish" and that you will want one overlooking the canal, so you should check first. (202) 342-0444; (800) 332-3442.

12 CAMPTON PLACE HOTEL, SAN FRANCISCO (24.67) One of the country's best—"elegance," "old-world luxury," and "excellent service" combine with the chef Bradley Ogden's "extraordinary" Campton Place Restaurant, its crown jewel. Rooms are "tiny but very posh"—request a "corner room" or consider a "wonderful suite." It is places like this that give San Francisco the reputation of being the West's most civilized city. However, we do hope "you're on an expense account." (415) 781-5555; (800) 647-4007.

13 HOTEL PLAZA ATHÉNÉE, NEW YORK (24.59) Neck and neck with the Carlyle as the best hotel in New York, but expect to pay for it; most of our reviewers rave about its "pure luxury," "European elegance," and "great restaurant" (Le Régence), but "small rooms" and "stuffy," "formal" atmosphere offend a handful—sneezing is forbidden, unless it is done in French. (212) 734-9100; (800) 225-5843.

14 THE CARLYLE, NEW YORK (24.32) "As good as they get," this Upper East Sider is expensive but "probably the best-run hotel in N.Y.C."; "very upper-crust and sedate," it has "perfectly maintained rooms with every amenity and service" and a clientele of the old rich and third-generation famous; besides offering an "exceptional buffet breakfast and brunch," it is a "great spot to meet for a drink or tea," and Bobby Short at the piano is a perennial favorite in the Café. (212) 744-1600; (800) 227-5737.

15 RITZ-CARLTON, BOSTON (24.28) Many feel that this Boston Brahmin is the "grande dame of U.S. hotels" and "easily the best in New England," for its "private, clublike" comfort, "consummately professional service," and wonderful rooms in the old wing with working fireplaces (but ask for one on an upper floor so that you have a view of the Boston Public Garden); things like the jacket-and-tie, no-jeans dress code strike some as "stuffy," but most would have "the Ritz" no other way. (617) 536-5700; (800) 241-3333. □

The *Zagat United States Hotel Survey*, available in two volumes covering the eastern and western halves of the country, will be in major bookstores or may be ordered directly from Zagat Survey, 45 West Forty-fifth Street, New York, NY 10036 ($9.95 per volume plus $1.25 postage).

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